The Work of Dionysius Barsalībi Against the Armenians

Woodbrooke Studies 4

Alphonse Mingana



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The present volume is the fourth in the series of *Woodbrooke Studies*, the contents of which are based on manuscripts in my collection. It is much less bulky than its predecessors owing to the fact that it represents one fasciculus only of the "Studies". This plan has been adopted in order to have the two following volumes entirely devoted to the theological works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the importance of which renders separate treatment desirable.

This volume contains the controversial work of Dionysius Barṣalībi (died A.D. 1171) against the Armenians, and is not without considerable interest to the theologian and Church historian.

Here, as in the previous volume, my thanks are due to the Aberdeen University Press and to friends and colleagues for their helpful suggestions.

A. MINGANA.

THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY,
21*st October*, 1931.

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WOODBROOKE STUDIES.

CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS IN SYRIAC, ARABIC, AND GARSHŪNI, EDITED AND TRANSLATED WITH A CRITICAL APPARATUS.

BY A. MINGANA.

FASCICULUS 9.

THE WORK OF DIONYSIUS BARṢALĪBI AGAINST THE ARMENIANS.

PREFATORY NOTE.

IN the following pages I give the text and translation, accompanied by a critical apparatus, of Barṣalībi's treatise against the Armenians. Manuscripts containing this work are so rare that none is definitely known to Baumstark.[1] The work adds much to our knowledge in the matter of early Christian controversies, and throws into relief very forcibly the theological views of the Christian communities with which it deals, as reflected in their dogmatic and abstract beliefs and in their ecclesiastical morality.

The first two chapters give a short sketch of the political and religious history of the Armenians, whom the author shows to have strong leaning towards the doctrine of the Phantasiasts as promulgated by Julian of Halicarnassus and propagated by Felicissimus[2] and others. This propagandist (whose history has still to be written) apparently misrepresented the Severan doctrine of the corruptibility and incorruptibility of the body of Christ, and in this way gained for a time a firm footing among the Armenians. Barṣalībi is at some pains to prove that the body of Christ was, as a true human body, corruptible till the time of His death, but that the body of the dead and risen Christ is and will remain for ever incorruptible.

[1] *Geschichte d. Syr. Lit.*, p. 297.

[2] In a MS. in the *British Museum* (p. 939 in Wright's *Catalogue*) Felicissimus is accused of forging the name of Peter of Alexandria.

In this connection the author rightly argues against the Phantasiasts and the Docetes that Christ ate and drank in reality and not figuratively only, and that He was truly circumcised like the rest of the Jews of His day. He endeavours also to show that since our Lord ate and drank in reality, He must have digested His food, and in this respect he refutes at some length the contention of the Armenians that "Christ's food was not digested like our own, but that it was consumed away like fire consumes matter." Against this Docetic teaching rises with vehemence the famous East Syrian poet Narsai: "Let the ranks of the Heretics stand up in shame, because they do not believe that the body of our Lord was a true body." [1] That the teaching of the Phantasiasts led by Julian of Halicarnassus was widely spread among the Armenians is also borne out by an independent East Syrian historian, John of Phenek, who writes thus: "The demon caused another offshoot, worse than the others, to rise among (the followers of Cyril) and this was the wicked Julian. . . . But the grace of the Lord threw him in the midst of an ignorant people, the heretical Armenians, by whom his teaching was accepted." [2]

After these two preliminary chapters the author embarks on his main theme, which consists in the exposition and refutation of the uncanonical customs and habits of the Armenians. According to the indications of the MS., these customs number thirty-three [3] (though they seem to number thirty-five) and mostly bear on the following subjects:

(1) They fast from morning till morning on Wednesdays and Fridays.

(2) They use unleavened bread for the Eucharist.

(3) They do not mix water with the Eucharistic wine.

(4) They sacrifice lambs at the feast of the Passover.

(5) They bless salt with prayers and canticles as if to sanctify their sacrifices with it.

(6) They believe that if a dog or a cat enter a church the latter becomes desecrated.

(7) They hold that if a mouse falls into food the latter becomes polluted.

[1] See my edition of the works of this Father in my *Narsai Homiliae et Carmina*, vol. i., p. 44.

[2] John of Phenek in my *Sources Syriaques*, ii., 141.

[3] They are written in figures on the margins of the MS.

(8) They pretend that a utensil that has been polluted should be broken up if it is made of earthenware, and that if it is made of metal it should only be purified with fire.

(9) They re-baptise the members of the other Christian denominations who join them.

(10) They make use of sesame oil in their holy Chrism.

(11) They do not allow anyone to sleep in their churches.

(12) They do not permit laymen to read the Gospels.

(13) They hold that laymen are not allowed to recite the Lord's Prayer.

(14) They refuse Holy Communion to repentant sinners for a long time.

(15) They baptise their crosses and Church bells.

(16) They make use of the Canonical Confession in a wrong way.

(17) They do not wash their hands in the Church at the beginning of the Mass.

(18) They celebrate the two festivals of the Nativity and the Epiphany in one day.

(19) They burn a wrong kind of incense in their Churches.

(20) They do not cross themselves with one finger only.

(21) They eat oil and ground sesame in Lent.

(22) They do not open the doors of their Churches at the time of the Offertory.

(23) They use holy Chrism for the purpose of healing ordinary wounds of men and beasts.

(24) They baptise after they have eaten.

(25) Their bishops and their monks eat meat.

(26) Their priests believe like the Jews that pork is unclean and consequently do not eat it.

(27) They have not the impediment of spiritual affinity in their marriages.

(28) They take the consecrated Host from the Chalice with their hands.

(29) They genuflect on Sundays and Pentecostal days.

(30) They transfer to a Sunday the celebration of all the commemorations and festivals, with the exception of the festival of the Epiphany.

(31) Their priests bless their bishops.

(32) They believe that leaven owes its origin to the digested food of Shem, son of Noah, or to that of Adam himself.

(33) The ordination of their clergy in Cilicia is invalid as they receive it from the dead hand of St. Gregory the Illuminator.

(34) They practise Simony in their ordinations.

(35) They resort to the principle of heredity in the ordination of their high ecclesiastical dignitaries.

Judged by modern standards of theological value, the above list of ecclesiastical irregularities contains much that is trivial. It does exhibit, however, accusations of a rather serious character, which we see often repeated in later generations by the compilers of the hundred and seventeen accusations brought against the Armenians before the Pope Benedict XII.[1]

In 1904 Dr. Erwand Ter-Minassiantz collected all the information found in Syriac literature concerning the Armenians,[2] and his monograph (with some slight corrections) can be recommended to all critics, but in the light of the present work of Barṣalībi it will naturally be considered incomplete. This is not surprising, because this famous Syrian prelate lived many years of his life in Melitene, among the Armenians, and thus must have acquired a more intimate knowledge of the inner working of the Armenian Church than many of his contemporaries. Tested by all standards of modern criticism, the author's account of the Armenians is on the whole reliable and accurate. I am not alluding here to his controversial method, nor to some slight exaggerations that one may detect in his narrative. The too zealous and vehement character of the ecclesiastical controversies of his day made these exaggerations almost inevitable, and the reader will do well sometimes to neglect the shell of his discourse and only pick the kernel of his theological and his historical data. Among these I will draw attention to the following :

1. The author fixes the date of the translation of the works of Syrian Fathers into Armenian, and attributes the first initiative for this

[1] Tournebize has detailed them in his *Histoire Politique et Religieuse de l'Arménie*, pp. 337-400. They are also found in Mansi, *Sacr. Concil. nova et ampl. collectio*, xxv., 1185-1270. See also Hefele, vi., 569-577.

[2] *Die Armenische Kirche in ihren Bez. zu d. Syr. Kirchen* in *Texte und Unters.* (N.F.), xi. Band, 4 Heft, pp. 1-212.

noble idea to the West Syrian Patriarch Athanasius (A.D. 724-740). He writes as follows :

"And our Patriarch alienated to Ohannes[1] a monastery situated on the frontiers (of Syria and Armenia), and he placed therein Syrian and Armenian boys, who learnt both the Syriac and Armenian languages and translated the works of the Fathers from Syriac into Armenian."

This interesting undertaking had good results, to which we owe among other things the survival of many Syriac treatises lost in our days in Syriac, but preserved in Armenian.

2. The author is evidently in favour of receiving the Holy Communion frequently, and answers thus the objection of the Armenians who, on the plea that "we are not worthy to partake of it at all times," precluded recent penitents from participating in it :

"If you are not worthy of it to-day, show us when you will be. Every day we live we add sins to our sins, and there is no one that would be pure before God even if he were to live one hour only. The sun and the stars are not pure before Him. Paul calls himself 'off-scouring,' and David a 'worm,' and Abraham 'dust.' As the body is not able to live without bread, so the soul is not able to live without communion. . . . As the one who receives baptism is called the son of the Father, so also the one who receives communion is united to Christ. As a piece of bread that is thrown into wine imbibes it, so also the one who partakes of the Sacrament imbibes holiness and life from the Holy Communion."

These are strong and far-reaching words.

3. The author is amazingly well versed in Patristics. Indeed, so accurate is his knowledge in this matter that one is almost tempted to believe that he knew his Greek and Syrian Fathers by heart. I have verified all his quotations in Migne's *Patrologia Græca*, and the labour that such verifications often entail has not been without utility to me, as it has refreshed my memory in a subject that by force of circumstances I had for a time to neglect. I would further add that the author has preserved for us passages of Fathers of whose works we have only fragmentary knowledge. As such I would mention his quotations from Hippolytus of Rome, Theophilus of Alexandria, and, to a lesser degree, Gregory Nazianzen.

[1] The Armenian Catholicos. *Ohannes* means "John."

Barṣalībi seems also to have had an intimate knowledge of the early Synods and Canons of the Church, both genuine and spurious, and to have been at home in such important Christian books as the *Didascalia* and the Clementine literature both in their Greek and Syriac garb.

4. As referred to above, the author's polemical style reflects the drift of the age in which he lived, and is occasionally marked by undue severity. This is especially the case in the section dealing with the strange opinion that some Armenians of his day had of the origin of leaven. Against the Armenian character in general he quotes the famous sentence of St. Gregory Nazianzen, called by Eastern writers "the Theologian" *par excellence*: "I do not find that the Armenians are a simple and open race, but rather a secretive and deceitful one."[1] Whatever truth there is in this verdict of a great Father of the Universal Church, no serious historian of the Eastern Churches will easily forget the inhuman sufferings which, in defiance of all the laws of God and man, were recently inflicted on the Armenians. Indeed in many provinces of the now defunct Ottoman Empire, it is the children of Thorgom, as the author is pleased to call them, who bore the brunt of a politico-religious fanaticism that is foreign to Ḳur'ānic teaching, and lifted high the torch of faith and of the ancient Christian virtue of endurance.

In 1927 I published another polemical work by Barṣalībi,[2] in the "Prefatory Note" to which I stated that in view of the author's too concise style and too disconnected reasoning, I had to sacrifice on the altar of clearness my predilection for literal translations. Happily this difficulty is generally absent from the present treatise, and my rendering of it is consequently less free than that I was forced to adopt for its predecessor.[3]

At the end of the present treatise (as the last folio of the facsimile reproductions shows) is another anti-Armenian treatise by Barṣalībi, which occupies ff. 42[a] (middle)—99 of the MS. I had intended to publish this work also, but after having perused it carefully I came to

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 518.

[2] *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. i., pp. 17-95.

[3] In 1925 I published also the second part of Barṣalībi's work against the Mohammedans under the title of *An Ancient Syriac Translation of the Ḳur'ān.*

the conclusion that its contents did not warrant its immediate publication. It gives the controversial work of the author against Kewark or Gregory ii, the Armenian Catholicos (A.D. 1065-1105), who had endeavoured to refute a theological treatise by the West Syrian Patriarch John bar Shūshan who died in 1073. It mostly deals with the vexed questions concerning the use of leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist and whether a fast extends from the morning of the fast day or from the evening of the preceding day, questions discussed at some length in the present treatise.

The Syriac text here given in facsimile is that contained in a MS. of my collection numbered Mingana Syriac 347.[1]

TRANSLATION.

By the power of the Lord of all, which cannot be weakened, I will begin to write the fifth book[2] *of Mar Dionysius (Barṣalībi) against the heresy of the Phantasiasts from which sprang the creed of the Armenians, and against the practices in which the latter indulge.*

CHAPTER I.

Of the treatise against the (Armenian) nation, on when it embraced the Christian faith.

The Armenians descend from Togarma,[3] their first father. They are called Armenians from the name of the Great and Septentrional Armenia, which was the habitat of their fathers. They were pagans down to the time of the Emperor Constantine, and they worshipped idols along with Ṭurātaṭīs[4] their King. They were evangelised by the

[1] For a description of the MS. see pp. 644-645 of my forthcoming Syriac catalogue.

[2] The author refers to his controversial works against the Jews, the Muslims, the Nestorians, and the Chalcedonians, which constitute four separate books.

[3] This is probably *Thorgoma*, the legendary father of the Armenians, spoken of by Moses of Khorene in his history, cap. v., and vii.-xii. See Tournebize, *Histoire polit. et relig. de l'Arménie*, p. 9.

[4] This is probably the King Tiridates converted by Gregory the Illuminator. See Sabeos' *Life of Heraclius*, i., iii., 33 and Tournebize, *Histoire*, pp. 50-59, etc.

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illustrious Gregory (the Illuminator), as the history of the latter shows. After he had evangelised them he went to Leontius,[1] bishop of Cæsarea of Cappadocia, from whom he received priesthood, which he introduced to them. They increased gradually in the fear of God, and they received the teaching of St. Ephrem the Syrian and of other (Syrian Fathers), and also the teaching of the Greek Doctors such as Basil and Gregory and others.

When the Council of Chalcedon which divided Christ into two natures took place, they fell out with the Chalcedonians and joined us. A long time after sprang the heresy of Julian of Halicarnassus, which resembled the doctrine of Mani and taught (that the body of our Lord was) a resemblance only and a phantasm. Many nations were deceived by it, and it was disseminated among the Armenians by Felicissimus and others who followed the teaching of Julian. These detracted before them St. Severus and misrepresented him in the matter of "corruption"[2] (as applied to the body of our Lord), which is used in two different ways, the first of which with regard to hunger, thirst and death, and the second with regard to the dissolution and the decomposition[3] of the elements from which the body is composed. They said that Severus did not teach that the body of Christ was corruptible as the word is used in the first way only,[4] that is to say that it suffered hunger, thirst and death, but that he taught that the same body of Christ suffered dissolution and decomposition in the tomb.

After having deceived the Armenians for a long time (Felicissimus and others) spread the doctrine of the Phantasiasts everywhere. St. Severus, however, in his numerous controversies against Julian and his followers, exposed their error and showed that the body of Christ from His birth to His resurrection was called corruptible, because it

[1] This Leontius seems to have been a kind of a Metropolitan having jurisdiction over the churches of Cappadocia and of the Great and Little Armenia. See Gelasius in Mansi, *Sacr. Conc. Coll.*, ii., 929, and Tournebize, *Histoire*, p. 53. [2] About the various uses of this word see below.

[3] The two words, ܫܪܝܐ ܘܦܘܚܠܗܕܐ, which are more or less illegible in Mingana Syr. 347, have been supplied from Mingana Syr. 215 (fol. 305 *b*).

[4] Here also the words ܐܡܪܘ ܕܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܪܢܐ which owing to a hole have disappeared from M. 347, have been supplied in the translation from M. 215 (*ibid.*).

ate and drank and suffered pains, but it did not suffer dissolution and corruption in the tomb. Afterwards learned Doctors convinced the Armenians and brought them back to the truth.

Some ignorant men amongst them hold leaven or leavened bread to be corruptible, but unleavened bread incorruptible. Some of them apply also the word " corruption " to the natural function of digestion, and pretend that Christ did not eat like everybody else, and that He was not circumcised. Against their teachers and their head of the present day we rose in our books and demonstrated to them from the teaching of the Doctors that Christ was truly circumcised, that He truly ate and drank whenever He wished, and that He did everything like us apart from sin. Indeed in another book divided into three parts, subdivided into chapters, and in yet another book entitled *Theology* [1] and elsewhere we have refuted their objections at some length. Here we will only deal succinctly with these same (objections) and will dilate more especially on their disorderly practices.

They pretend that if Christ ate, He was obliged to do so, that is to say He ate by necessity. About all these we will say :—

" Because we are men only we are compelled by nature, even if we do not like it, to eat and drink and eject our digested food, and also to suffer from blameless infirmities and to die according to the law of nature. Christ, however, because He was not only man but God incarnate, who assumed our body and soul together with the natural and blameless infirmities, whenever and wherever He wished He caused His body and His soul to feel their natural and blameless infirmities for our sake, as He had become flesh in our behalf. He was the Word, the master of His body and of His soul, and whenever He wished He placed them high above the law of nature, and whenever He wished He allowed them to follow the law of nature. By doing the latter He confuted those who contend that He was not a true man but a similitude and a phantasm of one, and by doing the things that are high above the law of nature, He refuted [2] the theory of those who believed that He was only a man and not God incarnate."

[1] *Cf.* on this work that appears to be lost Baumstark's *Ges. d. Syr. Lit.*, p. 296. The reference that Baumstark makes to MS. 23 of Edessa as possibly containing a copy of this work is erroneous, as that MS. contains a Garshūni work by another writer.

[2] Read *makkis.*

They ask : "Has the body (of Christ) assumed the (attributes) of the Word-God from the Union (in the Incarnation) or not ?" Concerning this we say :—

"He assumed some of them from this Union and some others at the time of His resurrection, and some others He will never assume. From this Union the Word established in His soul and in His body the power of healing all manner of ailments and sickness, spiritual and corporeal, and He also made His natural body as giver of life, and rendered it worthy of adoration and holy, and also remote from all sinful thought and act. He, however, left it liable to sufferings and to death till the time of His resurrection, in order that in suffering and dying in it He might obtain for us impassibility and immortality. He thus granted to it at His resurrection what it had not assumed at His Union, namely impassibility, immortality and incorruptibility. The Word who was the absolute master granted to His soul and to His body that which He wished and at the time He wished. He did not receive nor was He given anything from anyone. Neither at the time of His Union nor at the time of His resurrection nor at the present moment has He made His body uncreated and uncircumscribed in essence like Himself, nor consubstantial with the Father, nor eternal without beginning and end like Himself."

The Julianists ask also : "Is the body (of Christ) God or not ?" Concerning this we say :—

"In essence the body is a body and not God, but by its Union with God it is not only body but also God."

And they add : "If the body is not God in essence, how can it be one nature ?" Against them we say :—

"If the body is in essence God, and the God-Word is God in essence, in what will Christ then be a man when He is God in His body and God in His Godhead ?"

The Armenians say : "We fear to hold that the body of Christ is corruptible." Against them we say :—

"Corruption is said in different ways as we have demonstrated in our work entitled *Rudiments*[1] *and on the Spiritual and Corporeal Natures.*[2] Sin is called corruption, as in the sentence : 'For all

[1] The word *pāsīḳātha* may have another meaning according to the context.

[2] This work seems to be lost.

flesh had corrupted his way;'[1] and punishment is also called corruption, as in the sentence: 'And behold I will destroy[2] them with the earth;' and the dissolution of the body in the grave is also called corruption, as in the sentence: 'And Thou, O God, cast them down into the pit of corruption.'[3] In none of these senses do we call the body of our Lord corruptible, because it did not commit any sin and prevarication, nor did it suffer dissolution in the grave. Even hunger is called corruption, as in the sentence: 'They disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast.'[4] The blameless passions (are also referred to by the word corruption) as in the sentence: 'Though our outward man perish, etc.'[5] Even the separation of the soul from the body is spoken of by the word 'corruption.'"

We do not say that the body (of Christ) was incorruptible before His resurrection in the sense that it was precluded by the Word from suffering dissolution, but we say it was corruptible in the sense that death is called corruption, and also in the sense that hunger, thirst, the thrusting of the nails in it, sadness, tribulations, and such like are called corruption. The Doctors call the body of our Lord corruptible because of the blameless infirmities to which it was liable down to the time of its resurrection. Cyril of Alexandria said in the second book of *Thesaurus:* "Because He took a corruptible and mortal body, subject to infirmities, by necessity He made His own the body and its infirmities."[6] And the Theologian[7] shows in his discourse on baptism that the impassible and the incorruptible is the one who is not mortal.[8] These will suffice for our demonstration of the different kinds of corruption.

[1] Gen. vi. 12.

[2] The Syr. verb used in this verse (Gen. vi. 13) literally means "I will corrupt them" in the sense of "I will destroy them."

[3] *Cf.* Ezek. xxxii. 18.

[4] Matt. vi. 16. The Syr. verb used in this verse means literally "*they corrupt* their faces."

[5] 2 Cor. iv. 16. The Syriac word for "perish" is "be corrupt."

[6] *Patr. Gr.*, lxxv., viii., 1378.

[7] Gregory Nazianzen.

[8] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., 366.

CHAPTER II.

Against the Armenians who lean towards the doctrine of the Phantasiasts.

Let us now come to other subjects. The Armenians say: "Although Christ ate as we do, we do not say that His food was digested like our own, but that this same food was consumed away like fire consumes matter."

We have demonstrated above that we eat by necessity and consequently eject the digested food also by necessity, and that Christ was free to make Himself hungry and eat whenever He wished, and not by necessity like ourselves. That He ate in reality, and not like fire which consumes the sacrifices, is borne out first by the great Basil, who says in his discourse on the Eucharist thus :—

"As our Lord bore hunger because His real food was digested, and as He bore thirst when the humidity of His body had given way, and as He felt fatigue when His muscles and nerves were tired by the fatigue of the journey, while His divinity was not affected by fatigue but His body only was receiving the effects of the human nature, so also He was affected by tears when He allowed His body to bear a natural infirmity."[1]

And Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, the brother of Basil, said in the fourteenth chapter of his discourse on exhortation:[2] "Christ never came near to sinful affections; as to the blameless affections, those which should not in reality be called affections, He experienced them in the receptacle of the body. There is an affection which is rightly called so, and there is one which is so figuratively only. The affection which touches the freewill of the mind and turns it from virtue to vice is a true affection, but the one which is in nature and follows the order of nature, is in reality an act and not an affection. As such are birth, growth, the sustentation of the body by the assumption and ejection of food, the concourse of the elements through the body,[3] the dissolution of that which was composed, and its return to its former elements. Which of these two kinds of affection does the mystery (of our religion)

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxi., 228-229.
[2] The quotation is from the *Oratio Catechetica*.
[3] The Greek is ἡ τῶν στοιχείων περὶ τὸ σῶμα συνδρομή.

say that God has received? Is it the affection that is a true affection and sinful, or that other which is a movement that is in nature? If our speech should affirm that God was in those affections that are blameable, we would be obliged to flee from the absurdity of such a teaching, as it would be announcing something incongruous to the Divine nature. If it should affirm that God put on our nature the origin and the substance of which had their beginning from Him, where does the teaching differ from the conception that befits God since in opinions about Him no affection of passibility enters into the faith?[1] We do not say that a physician is affected when he heals somebody who is affected (with malady). Even when the healer comes near the disease he is believed to be outside affection."[2]

Think, O you who ignorantly lean towards the doctrine of the Phantasiasts, and see that (this Father) teaches that Christ received birth and growth—which means that He grew in His body—and that He ate and ejected the digested food. He demonstrates also that the true affection is that of sin, and to this Christ never came near. This Doctor calls birth, eating, and ejection of food mere (human) acts, and these Christ performed and fulfilled. To show that He became a man He did all these things, but not forcibly and unwillingly, or at all times and continually, but whenever He desired and wished.

Those who believe in the teaching of the Phantasiasts recoil from saying that the flesh of Emmanuel was formed from the blood of Mary. Against them stands the wise man who wrote: "I was fashioned into flesh in the womb of my mother while I was in it formed of blood for ten months." We are shown in this quotation that the flesh of everyone is formed of the blood of his mother. But the Armenians ought to hear what Paul wrote about Christ: "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same;"[3] but our Lord was not born like us of a blood mixed with the will of the flesh and the intercourse of man. This St. John (Chrysostom) demonstrates in the second discourse of his commentary on Matthew: "He received birth not of blood nor of will of man and flesh but of the Holy Spirit."[4]

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xlv., 50. The Greek πάθος (affection) and its derivatives run through all this extract from Gregory Nyssen.

[2] This sentence is rather complicated, both in the Greek text and in its Syriac translation.

[3] Heb. ii. 14.

[4] *Pat. Gr.*, lvii., i., 26.

That the flesh of the Word was fashioned from the virginal blood of the Virgin, is borne out by the great Dionysius, who says in the third discourse: "We do not understand how Jesus was fashioned and formed of the blood of the Virgin in a supernatural way."[1] And Theophilus of Alexandria says: "Christ who saved us was not defiled and polluted when He strengthened His flesh by a virginal blood, in His anthropophile union with us.[2]

The Phantasiasts say: "Christ was not circumcised in reality, because the custom of the Israelites was to slit the foreskin into two and not to circumcise it or cut off anything from it."

Against them stands Paul who says: "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers."[3]

In this he shows that He was really and fully, and not figuratively, circumcised. And John (Chrysostom) says in the twenty-eighth discourse of his commentary on the Romans: "When (Paul) speaks of the minister of circumcision he means that He came and fulfilled all the law and was circumcised."[4] And Cyril of Alexandria says in his commentary on Luke: "He fulfilled circumcision and received His name at that time. Christ was circumcised on the eighth day and He received His name, as I said."[5] And the Theologian says in the discourse on Pentecost: "He was circumcised."[6] In this he meant that He was truly circumcised. These will suffice.

CHAPTER III.

Against the Armenians.

Following the subject that we have in hand we will proceed to write against the customs which the Armenians are holding illegally as from themselves only, and against some other habits which they have received from the old and shadowy law, after the appearance of the sun of righteousness.

The Armenians, the Greeks and some others are in a general habit of saying: "The day precedes the night, and light darkness,"

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, iii., 648.

[2] This quotation is not found *verbatim* in the extracts from Theophilus of Alexandria found in *Pat. Gr.*, lxv., 33-68.

[3] Rom. xv. 8.

[4] *Pat. Gr.*, lx., ix., 649.

[5] *Pat. Gr.*, lxxii., v., 497.

[6] Gregory Nazianzen, *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 436.

and for this reason they begin their fast from the morning, and not from the evening of Wednesday and Friday. They begin to fast from the morning of Wednesday and Friday, and [1] abstain till the morning of the next day. The Syrians, however, say that the night precedes the day and darkness the light, and for this reason they begin (their fast) in the evening of Wednesday and Friday and they abstain also from the evening of these days.

Two points which have disturbed the above nations need to be investigated here. The first point is the question whether the night precedes the day or the day the night, and the second point is the question whether it would be better to fast on the eve of the coming Wednesday and Friday or on the eve of the day on which these two days end.

All Doctors do not agree among themselves on these two points. Some of them hold that the night precedes the day and some of them favour the day. Moses said in the Torah : "And the evening and the morning were the first day," [2] that is to say, the end of twenty-four hours, because by the word *evening* he means *night*, and by the word *morning* he refers to *day*, and the word "Yauma" [3] embraces, as we have said, both night and day, and includes the complete course of twenty-four hours. It is day when the sun is above the earth, and this takes twelve hours ; and it is night when the sun is under the earth,[4] and this also takes twelve hours.

St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil declare that the day precedes the night, but by this they do not enact that one should fast from the morning, as the habit of fasting in the evening of Friday and Wednesday is not ancient. They say that the day precedes the night simply because the day is luminous, and God, as the Theologian [5] asserts, being light, He must have begun the work of creation in light. John (Chrysostom) says thus in his *Hexaemeron* : "'And the evening and the morning were the first day.' Moses means by "evening" the end of the day, and by "morning" the end of the night.'" [6] And he said this in the sense that the day and the night marked the

[1] Read *w-lā*. [2] Gen. i. 5.

[3] A Semitic word embracing both night and day.

[4] The author naturally writes in the light of the astronomical science of his day. [5] Gregory Nazianzen. *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvii., 439.

[6] *Pat. Gr.*, liii., 35.

end of one day, because he says that the day precedes the night. Other Doctors, however, say that (Moses) means by "evening" the night, and by "morning" the day, and that "evening" and "morning" signify the completion of a whole day, but as we have said above, St. Basil and St. John Crysostom say that the day precedes the night.

The darkness that was upon the face of the deep before light was created, is not called night but darkness, and when Moses said that "the evening was" he does not refer to that darkness by this word "evening." If Moses had said that "the evening was" before the creation of the light, it might have been possible to conjecture that by the word "evening" he referred to that darkness, but since Moses said that "the evening was" after the creation of light, it is clear that he did not call the evening by the word darkness, but that he meant the completion of the first day. This becomes evident by the fact that after it was called light and after this light had completed its hours, he said that "the evening was."

Not only Moses called the completion of the day "evening," but also the evangelists who said: "In the evening of the Sabbath towards the dawn of the first day of the week,"[1] and: "The same day at evening being the first day of the week."[2] The reason for this lies in the fact that there is a difference between evening and morning, and between day and night. It is "evening" when the light of the day ends, and it is only when the light goes under the earth that it is "night." Evening, therefore, designates the end of the day, and morning the end of the night. The darkness that was upon the face of the deep before the creation of the light is not called night but darkness. When light was created this very light was called day, and afterwards when darkness followed it this very darkness was called night.

The above Doctors have, however, asserted that the day precedes the night, because they have said that the night that precedes the evening of Saturday is the night of Friday.

If one were allowed to take objection to the assertion of the above Doctors one might say: If according to your judgment the night precedes the day, why then were the children of Israel ordered to

[1] Matt. xxviii. 1. [2] John xx. 19.

begin the Passover from the evening and the night of the preceding day? Similarly, why do we Christians begin to celebrate the festival of the Resurrection and other festivals from the evening and the night that precede them?

Some Greeks and Armenians answer thus: "According to the rule of the sun the day precedes the night, and according to the rule of the moon the night precedes the day. The Jews began their Passover according to the lunar computation, and in a like manner we also celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord on the fourteenth of the month first in the night and then in the day." In this, however, they are not right because we do not begin to celebrate any festival, with the exception of the festival of the Resurrection, from the morning, but from the preceding evening and night.

They add also: "When Moses says 'And the evening and the morning were the first day' he was not speaking in lunar computation because the moon was not yet created. He spoke according to the rule of light, and because this light disappeared after it had finished its hours, he said 'and the morning was.'"

This objection is not good because it is not the moon that is the cause of days and nights nor of mornings and evenings, but it is only the cause and the reason of the months. We say that the night precedes the day, and this is borne out by the fact that God ordered the Jews to observe the Sabbath, and for this purpose Moses taught them to cease work from the evening. Taking this into consideration the Christians begin also to observe the festival of the Resurrection and other festivals from the evening that precedes their respective days. Our Lord also rose from the tomb in the night of Easter before the day, and not in the night after the day.

If they were to say: "The night in which our Lord rose from the tomb was the night of Saturday," they would go against the evangelists who assert that the Christ rose in the night of Sunday and not of Saturday. It is indeed customary to the sacred Books to name the night of the day before the day itself. The Apostle said: "I was night and day in the abyss."[1] It is also written in the twenty-second chapter of the *Didascalia*, that is to say: "The Teaching of the Apostles": "The night that follows Tuesday is the night of

[1] *Cf.* 2 Cor. xi. 25 (Ḥarklean).

Wednesday, as it is written, 'And the evening and the morning were the first day.'" [1] This refers to the evening of the day that comes after it. Even St. John (Chrysostom) who, as we have seen above, asserted that the day precedes the night, says in the eighty-first discourse of his commentary on Matthew that in his days some people were in the habit of counting the day from the evening, because he writes thus: "*The first* (*day*) *of the* (*feast*) *of the unleavened bread*[2] refers to the day which precedes the feast of the unleavened bread, because it is a general habit to count the day from the evening, and in the case under consideration it refers to the day on the evening of which the Passover was kept." [3]

It is now our duty to bring (Scriptural) testimony to show that the evening precedes the morning. Moses said to the Hebrews: "Seven days all of you Israel shall eat unleavened bread. . . . You shall eat it at even." [4] And in the third Book (of the Pentateuch): "In the ninth day of the month at even from even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths." [5] And Joshua son of Nun: "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the plains of Jericho." [6] and in the Book of Samuel: "And the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day." [7] And David in Psal. lv.: "Evening, and morning and at noon." [8] And John the Evangelist said: "And they laid Jesus there in the sepulchre because the Sabbath was beginning." [9] And the wife of Pilate sent a message to her husband saying: "I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." [10] It is evident here that she knew the preceding night to be the same as the following day. And Mark said: "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning." [11]

After having so far demonstrated that the night precedes the day, and darkness the light, let us show in which evening it would be better

[1] *Cf.* on this subject *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Chap. 21, pp. 159-172 of the text), edited by Mrs. Gibson in 1903.

[2] Matt. xxvi. 17.

[3] *Pat. Gr.*, lviii. 729.

[4] Exod. xii. 15, 18.

[5] Lev. xxiii. 32.

[6] Josh. v. 10.

[7] 2 Sam. iii. 35.

[8] Ps. lv. 17.

[9] John xix. 42 (not *verbatim*).

[10] Matt. xxvii. 19.

[11] Mark xiii. 35.

to abstain : in the evenings of Wednesdays and Fridays, or in the mornings of Wednesdays and Fridays ? First of all we should state that this fast is not ordered by the Apostles and is consequently not very ancient,[1] but because the Greeks and the Armenians said that the day precedes the night they believed that they should begin to fast from the morning, that is to say, from the beginning of the day. The Syrians, however, after having examined the Books and seen that the night precedes the day, as we have demonstrated above, and darkness the light, as all tongues testify, have said that we should fast from the evening, but if they had kept the abstinence after the midday of Tuesday and of Thursday, their habit might perhaps be better vindicated, but because they do not abstain till after sunset of Tuesday and Thursday,[2] what need can the stomach have for food of abstinence or non-abstinence after sunset ? The Syrians are, therefore, right in believing in the precedence of evening and night (over morning and day), but to fast from morning till morning has a good semblance of truth.[3] As to us we do not abstain on Tuesday ; and on Wednesday we fast till the evening, and then we end our abstinence. Then we do not abstain on Thursday. but on Friday we fast from food till the evening and then we end our abstinence ; and we do not abstain all Saturday. We fast, therefore, and abstain on Wednesdays and Fridays, and in the evenings of Thursdays and Saturdays we do not abstain.[4] When we fast on Wednesdays and Fridays we have to eat the food of the day.[5]

There are amongst us some wise men who dissuade our people from abandoning an ancient habit, but if the Armenians and the Greeks concede our point of view that the night precedes the day, as we believe with the Doctors, there will be no harm on our part to

[1] The author refers here to the *mode* of fasting on Wednesday and Friday, and not to the fast itself which is found in the Apostolic Canons as promulgated by Clement, which he quotes frequently in his book. The special Canon dealing with fasting on Wednesday and Friday is found in the edition of de Lagarde, *Reliq. jur. eccl. Antiquissimæ*, p. 57 (of the text and Canon lxvi.). *Cf.* Apostolic Canons, Canon lxviii., in Hefele's edition, and especially Mansi, *Sac. Conc. collectio*, ii. 44.

[2] I translate all these sentences literally.

[3] I translate all this sentence literally.

[4] The above paragraph is somewhat complicated, but the line of the author's argument is quite clear, although some of the sentences which he uses are not clearly constructed.

[5] *I.e.* abstinence food.

concede also their point of view and eat in the evening of Saturday the same food that we eat in the day of Friday.[1]

But the Armenians object: "If the night precedes the day, you will have to partake of the Sacrament (of the Eucharist) after your food in the evening and in the night." Against this we say :—

"Lo, Christ also and His disciples ate first and partook of the sacrament afterwards. Know, O you (who say this) that between the food of the evening and the partaking of the sacrament intervenes the time of digestion and sleep, and this time lasts eleven hours. If we were eating after the middle of the night or at dawn, there would have been ground for argument. Examine and note well that as an effect of this objection when you pray in the evenings of the festival of the Resurrection and other festivals you would not pray for the festivals but for the day which precedes them. Likewise, with the exception of Matins and of the prayer of the Mass, the prayer of Vespers and Nocturns, which precedes the Sundays and festivals, would be without object.

We have demonstrated that the night precedes the day as surely as there is no taste in the juice of the alkanet.[2] Let us now show to them that although[3] we say that the night precedes the day we do not believe that they are mixed with each other, because we hear David saying: "The sun to rule by day,"[4] and Paul crying: "What communion hath light with darkness?"[5]

If the evening does not precede the morning, why do we cease work on the eve of Sundays and festivals? And why do you fast before the festivals? Further, the Apostles did not order us to observe in fasting the *evening* but the *day* of Wednesday and Friday, and the day is composed of twenty-four hours. This is the reason why we begin our fast from the evening, as you do fast yourself before the festivals.

Again, it is written that our Lord ate the Passover with His disciples in the evening, while the Jews did not eat till the morning in order to crucify the Son. The Syrians, therefore, eat in the evening as our Lord and His disciples ate the lamb in the evening, while the Greeks and the Armenians begin to break their abstinence in the morning

[1] About all this question of the mode of fasting see also below.
[2] A Syriac proverb.
[3] Read *aphen*.
[4] Ps. clvi. 8.
[5] 2 Cor. vi. 14.

like the Jews who ate the flesh of the lamb in the morning after the crucifixion.

Whether a man fasts in the evenings or not, according to his custom, if he does not do all with understanding he will not draw any benefit, because the Apostle said: "For neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse."[1] For our part we have demonstrated the truth of the Syrians, but it would have been to better advantage if we had tried to induce pagans to follow us in our fast and our belief that the night precedes the day! Let these suffice here.

CHAPTER IV.

Against the Armenians. Concerning their Second Habit.

Let our discourse stand now against those who after the sun rises resort to a candle, and after the appearance of Christ follow the prescriptions of Moses. It is said in the Book: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread,"[2] and Christ came and said: "I am the bread of life, he who eats me shall live for ever."[3] There is, therefore, a great difference between the Old and the New Testaments, and between azym and bread. Bread is derived from life[4] and is leavened, while the name of azym denotes death and not life.[5] Bread denotes life and azym signifies something in which there is no leaven of life.

We do not make use of azym, because it is devoid of life and because Christ is not said to have blessed azym, but bread: "He took bread and blessed it,"[6] and: "I am the living bread which cometh down from heaven, and the bread which I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world," and: "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever,"[7] and: "Give us our daily bread,"[8] and: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs,"[9] and: "Send the multitude away that they may go and buy themselves bread."[10] From all (these quotations we learn) that

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 8.
[2] Exod. xii. 15.
[3] John vi. 35, 47, 51.
[4] Has life in it.
[5] These linguistic niceties between "bread" and "unleavened bread" cannot always be expressed in English. The author has apparently an eye on the Syriac *paṭṭīra* "azym" from the verb *peṭar*, "to perish, to die."
[6] Matt. xxvi. 26, etc.
[7] John vi. 50-51.
[8] Matt. vi. 11.
[9] Matt. xv. 26.
[10] Matt. xiv. 15 (Peshiṭta).

bread is different from azym. If the bread spoken of (in the Gospels) was azym, where could one buy sufficient azym to feed five thousand beside women and children ?[1]

Why is azym more agreeable to you, O Armenians, than leavened bread ? If you say that it is more tasty, it is evident that nobody praises azym except the mill and those who work it ! Since the four evangelists called the bread that our Lord divided among His disciples by the simple word "bread," it was bread and not azym. So also Paul called it by this name. After (Christ) ate the lamb and the azym, He washed (the feet of) the Apostles and divided the bread among them. He thus made this washing the dividing line between the old and the new Law. If azym was used in the new as in the old Law, where is the "new" thing that happened to us according to His saying : "This is my body[2] of the 'New' Testament."

If you ask : "Where was leavened bread found at that time ?" we shall demonstrate to you (its existence) from the time, from the place, and from the temporal power (of the period). From the time, because the time of Kingdom and of prophecy had passed away from the Jews, and at that period they had nothing left but priesthood. From the place, because Jerusalem was full of Jews and of Gentiles. From the temporal power, because they were subjected to Herod the Greek and to Pilate the Roman. For this reason Jerusalem was full of leavened bread for the food of the Gentiles. And if you ask : "How was leavened bread found on the table while it was not ordered by law ?" we will retort : "How was wine found there, while it was not ordered by law, which had, on the contrary, ordered bitter herbs ?"[3] From this it is evident that He ordered His disciples to prepare what He Himself wished. They prepared the lamb, azym and gall for the fulfilment of the old Law, and they prepared leavened bread and wine for the inauguration of the new Law.

There were two tables on that evening. After having eaten the lamb according to the old Law, He began His supper ; and when

[1] *Cf.* Matt. xv. 38, etc.

[2] *Sic* cod. for "my blood," see Matt. xxvi. 28, etc.

[3] Exod. xii. 8, and Numb. ix. 11. Some Fathers believe that the text involves *a bitter drink*. For the sake of convenience I will translate sometimes the Syriac word by "gall," a sense which it often has.

He said: "Take and eat," He did something that was not found in their law, and because it was not their habit to eat leavened bread on that evening they needed a special order to eat.

We may also ask the Armenians: "Is the (Eucharistic) body[1] about which you are fighting like the body which our Lord took from the Virgin, or like the azym of Moses?" If they answer: "Like the body that He took from the Virgin, which itself was like the azym of Moses," let them show us where is such a thing written. They should not call the body of Christ azym, because the body that our Lord took was composed of four elements; and they should not make the sign of the cross over it, because at the time when azym was being offered (Christ) was not yet crucified; and they should not call it "of the New Testament," because azym was only offered in the Old Testament; and they should not call it "bread of life," but "azym of life," because Christ did not say "I am the azym of life" but "the bread of life."

Further, how would Christ make His body from dead azym, when this same body is living and has a soul? If He had done this and given us His body in azym, there would have been room for argument in favour of the erroneous doctrine of the partisans[2] of Apollinarius, who pretended that He joined to Himself a body without a soul. Even Melchizedech, who was the figure of Christ in priesthood, offered leavened bread and wine, because there was no azym down to the time of the Exodus from Egypt.

It may be asked here: "If the Word-God took from us an azymous creation, that is to say, devoid of the acidity of the sin, why should we put leaven in the dough?" We answer: "The creation of Adam was no doubt azymous and free from the stain of sin, as it was composed of the four elements, but when he transgressed the commandment it fermented in two ways, the first of which is that he was subjected to sin, and the second is that he was subjected to the blameless infirmities that affected him from the punishment inflicted on him by God for disciplinary education. In the first case, which involves sin, fermentation of leaven is blameworthy; but in the second case which only involves blameless infirmities, fermentation of leaven is not blameworthy.

[1] I will often translate the word "body" used in this connection by "Eucharistic bread."

[2] Insert here a word such as *talmīdhē*, "disciples, partisans."

The transmission of leaven began from the transgression of Adam, because if he had not transgressed the commandment he would have been in no need to eat bread, but after he transgressed the commandment, his creation fermented by itself as a sign that we became subject to sin and corruption. Because the Word-God put on the body of Adam, He subjected His body by His will to blameless infirmities for our salvation. For this reason we ought to mix leaven with the body which we consecrate, in order to show that Christ suffered blameless infirmities for us in His body. Those who make His body azymous show that the blameless infirmities did not affect Him, such as pains, introduction of nails (into His hands and feet), sufferings, fear, anguish and death, all of which He endured by His will in His body for us.

St. Ephrem said in his discourse on the Passion: "And in the place of this heavy azym which weighs on the stomach, I will give you living bread, which is leavened with the Holy Spirit." And St. John Chrysostom said in the twenty-fourth discourse of his commentary on the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "He did not give His body without purpose; because the first nature of the body that was fashioned from earth was overtaken by sin to death, and was straying from life, He introduced, so to speak, another dough and leaven, His body, which by nature was identical with its prototype, but which was free from sin and full of life, and He gave it for all to take." [1] And Clement rejected azym in the eighth part of his book, because he says in the sixty-fifth Canon: "If a bishop or a priest or any member of the clergy fasts with the Jews or celebrates Easter with them, or receives from them gifts dealing with the feast such as azym or any other similar thing, let him be anathema. If he is a layman, let him be segregated." [2]

Let us now proceed to demonstrate that it is necessary to mix leaven with the dough used for (the Eucharistic) bread. We begin by saying that *ḥemīra* "leaven" is a word of neutral morality [3] like wealth, poverty, sun, north, mountain and health. Sometimes it denotes sin and wickedness, and sometimes goodness. The Kingdom of Heaven has been compared to leaven, but the malice and hypocrisy

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, lxi., 201.

[2] *Reliq. jur. eccl. antiquissimæ* (edit. de Lagarde), p. 57.

[3] In the text "middle word." The author explains this expression in his treatise which in the MS. follows the present one.

of the Pharisees have also been likened to it: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,"[1] and: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened."[2] The woman here denotes divinity, and leaven denotes Christ who mixed Himself with the three descendants of Noah, leavened them and turned them away from the worship of idols.

And Amos said: "And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven."[3] And Hosea: "The baker who ceaseth from raising after he hath kneaded the dough until it be leavened."[4] And Moses offered leavened bread in the feast of Pentecost: "Two wave loaves shall be baked with leaven."[5] And the Theologian said in the second discourse on the Son: "In order that He may also sanctify man with His hands and become leaven to all His creation, He joined to Himself all that had been condemned in it so that He should save it from condemnation." And St. John Chrysostom said in the fifteenth discourse of his commentary on the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "If they freed the houses from leaven with so much care that they even searched the holes of mice, with stronger reason should we examine our souls. . . . Now wherever there is a Jew there is leaven, for azym is produced in the middle of towns, and this is considered more a plaything than law, because as reality has come there is no more room for the figures. . . . Do not look therefore for azym such as this, because you have no lamb such as this; do not look for leaven such as this, because you have no azym such as this. In the spiritual leaven azym may become leavened, but leaven never becomes azym."[6] Here the Doctor calls the old Dispensation leaven, and shows that sometimes leaven denotes virtue such as the leaven that is mixed with the dough, and sometimes vice; and he rejects azym and calls it Jewish.

And St. Ephrem said in the seventy-fourth *Ḳauma*[7] of the Passion: "I give you leaven to eat: all of you, therefore, renounce azym; I give you my living cup to drink: flee therefore, from that containing gall. From now onwards you will eat a Passover that is new and pure, a leavened and perfect bread that is kneaded and baked by the Holy Spirit. I will give you to drink a wine that is composed

[1] Matt. xvi. 6.
[2] Matt. xiii. 33.
[3] Amos iv. 5.
[4] Hos. vii. 4.
[5] Lev. xxiii. 17.
[6] *Pat. Gr.*, lxi., 126.
[7] Name of a prayer in the West Syrian breviary.

of fire and water." And he said in the fifth discourse on the Passion : "O Lord, blessed be he who saw Thee in this feast standing and carrying bread in Thy hand : Thy living and holy body. Let even azym offer thanksgivings to Thee in this feast, because Thou hast withheld it from the mouth of the people who have been ungrateful to Thee." And in the hymn that begins with the words, " Lo, is killed in Egypt . . ."[1] he said : "The Church gave us living bread in the place of the azym that Egypt gave. Our Lord ate the Passover with His disciples by means of the bread that He broke. The bread of the Saviour of all abrogated azym, and contrary to azym, the eaters of which died, the bread that He broke saved His people. It is not azym that rejuvenates the soul, it is the body of the Son that rejuvenates all. Lo, it is by leaven that the Gentiles have been rejuvenated, and the (Jewish) people have become senile with azym."

St. Ephrem says also in his discourse on the sentence (of the Gospel) "leaven which a woman took" :[2] "The living Word of God came down, put on a body and became leaven to our creation, the taste of which had lost its savour through sin. He compared Himself with leaven, and He explained to us the three faculties of the soul by means of simple flour. You eat every day the leaven of His divinity in bread. After He had eaten the azym and the lamb of sacrifice that was only a figure, He took the true bread, the mystery of His holy body."

Show us now what new thing would the New Testament have given us if we had the same azym in it as there was in the Old Testament ? Let any man take leavened bread in his right hand and unleavened bread in his left, and travel in all the world and ask : "What are these ?" Everybody will call the leavened bread in his right hand simply "bread," and the unleavened bread in his left hand "azym." From this everyone should be satisfied that Christ took in His hand and blessed leavened bread. In the place of the lamb of Moses the lamb of God was sacrificed ; and in the place of circumcision Christ gave us baptism ; and in the place of the Sabbath He gave us Sunday ; and in the place of azym He gave us bread. These will suffice.

[1] The first words of a hymn by St. Ephrem.
[2] Matt. xiii. 33.

CHAPTER V.

Against the Armenians.

Let us now proceed to discuss the elements of which the Eucharistic bread is composed and the meanings found in each one of these elements. The Eucharistic bread is composed of flour, water, leaven, salt, and oil, and these symbolise the mystery of Christ whose body is composed of the four elements and who is endowed with a rational soul. The flour symbolises the earth, the water symbolises the water, the salt symbolises the fire, and leaven symbolises the air, while the oil takes the place of the soul, because after Adam was fashioned the Creator breathed life in him.

Salt is also the symbol of love and leaven the symbol of intelligence. As to oil it is the symbol of the mercy of God, as shown by the dove which announced to us the end of the flood by means of an olive branch ; by the children who received the Christ with olive branches ; and by the injury inflicted on the man who fell among thieves, which was healed with oil. The salt is good because with it all oblations are seasoned,[1] and the olive oil (is good) because with it our wounds have been healed. God said to Moses : " Make two cakes unleavened, tempered with oil."[2] And Joel said : "I will send you corn, and wine, and oil."[3] See how oil was used in the ancient sacrifices ; and this oil was the symbol of the olive oil which we mix with the Eucharistic bread.

Leaven is also the symbol of the true faith, because as it draws the dough to its savour, so also Christ draws all to Himself through faith in Him, in His Father and in the Holy Spirit. He said in this connection : "And when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me."[4] As to oil it symbolises also our hope as long as we have our passible body which is subject to affections. We mix leaven with our bread because it has a more savoury taste than azym. Leaven denotes also the growth of the body of the Word-God : as leaven increases and expands the dough, so also the Word increased in His body while in His divinity He was perfect and in no need of growth.

Again leaven symbolises the soul which was united with the Word,

[1] Lev. ii. 13.
[2] Exod. xxix. 2.
[3] Joel ii. 19.
[4] John xii. 32.

and the salt found in the Eucharistic bread symbolises the mind that the Word took in His humanity. Job said: "That which is unsavoury is not eaten without salt,"[1] and he means by "unsavoury" the unleavened, which has been abrogated and is no more eaten after the preaching of the Gospel. "Every oblation shall be seasoned with salt,"[2] is an all-binding sentence, and those who offer as sacrifice azym which has no salt in it, do not offer a perfect Eucharistic bread.[3] Elisha symbolised this kind of salt when he cast salt in "naught water and healed it."[4]

And Paul said in the Epistle to the Corinthians: "Let us keep the feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the leaven of sincerity and truth."[5] And Mar Jacob said in the discourse on the Nativity: "In this day the leaven of life ran through the (Adamic) creation, because the human kind had become azymous before His coming. In this day salt came down from the Most High in order to season the unsavoury taste with sweet savour." And our Lord said: "Ye are the salt of the earth,"[6] and again: "Have salt in yourselves,"[7] that is to say love.

Some ignorant Armenians advance an unsavoury and nauseating opinion: "when Shem son of Noah was little he mixed his digested food with dough which was immediately leavened; and leaven dates from this act. This is the reason why we do not mix leaven with the Eucharistic bread."

These sentences are truly inspired by the Devil and are the teaching of the Evil one. Whence did you learn this? In which book is it written except in the book of the Evil one? If that were so your Kings, your Priests and your Bishops, and you with them, would be eating filth all the days of your life. In that case how can a mouth which is every day sullied by filth take the body of Christ? What is even harder is that after the sacrifice and the purity of the Eucharist you eat the bread of filth, because as usual uncleanness sullies purity.

[1] Job vi. 6. [2] Lev. ii. 13; Mark ix. 49.

[3] Lit. "body" that is the consecrated Host. The word *paghra*, "body," is often used in the text in this sense. I will generally translate it by "Eucharistic bread."

[4] 2 Kings ii. 21.

[5] 1 Cor. v. 8 (Peshitta). In a footnote it is said here: "In the Harklean Version it is written, 'With the azym of sincerity,' but in the Armenian Version 'leaven' is written as in the Peshitta."

[6] Matt. v. 13. [7] Mark ix. 50.

Indeed, when something unclean is thrown in a consecrated place it becomes desecrated and needs reconsecration.

See now how Gregory Nyssen rejects also azym in his discourse on the Saturday that precedes Easter-day.[1] After having referred to the objection of the Jews who say : "Since you keep the Passover on the fourteenth day you should also observe the custom of azym and bitter herbs," this Doctor interprets each of these things spiritually and shows that we should not make use of azym, but because the unleavened bread used before *Pascha*—that is to say *Passover*—has a relation to bitter herbs, let us rather see of which substance was the bread that was made after the resurrection : the bread and the honeycomb which were seen in the hands of the Lord at the time when Peter was fishing.[2] See how this Father calls the unleavened bread "azym," and how he calls also "leavened bread" the bread which the Lord gave to the disciples when He saw them fishing.

The Armenians have another habit : they do not mix water with the wine of their chalice which thus contains only wine.—Against them we will say :

The Apostle John said and wrote that "blood and water came out of the side of the Lord."[3] The blood symbolises His life, and water His death. If, therefore, we were saved by His death why should we not keep the remembrance of His death by means of the water of the communion-cup, when He Himself said, "Thus do in remembrance of my death."[4] Would not those who offer wine only deny His Passion and His death for us ? The pagans and the Jews offer wine only in their sacrifices, and they are deprived of the faith of Christ and of true life that came to us through His death.

St. Ephrem says : "The water cries that Christ has been killed, and the blood proclaims that He is living by nature." And Clement says in the second book : "Let the communion-cup be filled with wine. It is filled with wine and water, because it is a sign of blood and washing (baptism)."[5] St. John Chrysostom, in commenting upon

[1] In Syriac "Saturday of the Message."

[2] *Pat. Gr.*, xlvi., iii., 617-620.

[3] John xix. 34.

[4] *Cf.* 1 Cor. xi. 25-26. The Syriac text has "thus" for "this."

[5] The second book of Clement as published by de Lagarde (*Reliq. jur. eccl. antiquissimæ*, pp. 15-19) is fragmentary. The quotation, however, is found verbatim in Rahmani's *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, p. 130, and in Mingana Syr. 12 (fol. 38). *Cf.* also Barhebræus, *Nomocanon*, p. 36 (edit. Bedjan).

the sentence, "And blood and water came out of the side of our Lord," says: "In this an ineffable mystery was consummated. Water and blood did not come out to no purpose as if by accident, because it is of these two springs which flowed that the Church is constituted; and the initiated know that in water they are born afresh and that in blood and water they are nurtured. This mystery began from that, and when you come near the awe-inspiring chalice you should approach it as if you were going to drink from the side (of Christ)."[1] Where are now those who pretend that this water baptised Adam? The Doctor shows here that this water symbolises the baptism and also the water which we mix with the wine of the chalice, and in saying that (the believers) are nurtured in blood and water he taught us to mix water with the wine of the chalice.

The Armenians say in this connection that the same St. John Chrysostom said in his commentary on Matthew that we should not mix water with wine.—Against them we will say:

The Doctor could not have contradicted himself, but he knew what he was saying in this place and in the other. When he noticed that the Manicheans, the dirty Messalians, and Severus, the heretic, were offering the Eucharistic sacrifice with water only, as you now use wine only, he, the eminent Doctor, refuted them in the eighty-fourth discourse of his commentary on Matthew in showing that we should mix wine with water, and that the fruit of the vine is wine and not water.[2] And he said also in the twenty-fourth discourse of his commentary on the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "This is the body which was reddened by the blood produced by the spear, and which caused two springs to jet forth for all the world: a spring of water and a spring of blood."[3] And before this (sentence) he said: "What is found in this chalice is that which flowed from His side, and that of which we partake."[4]

And Gregory Nyssen said in the third discourse of his commentary on the Song of Solomon: "Tell me where thou feedest,[5] in order that I may find pasture of life for myself and delight in the heavenly

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, lix., viii., 463.

[2] *Ibid.*, lviii., 740. John Chrysostom speaks in this section of Marcion, Valentinus, and Mani.

[3] *Ibid.*, lxi., x., 203.

[4] *Ibid.*, lxi., x., 199.

[5] Song of Sol. i. 7.

nourishment of which any one who does not partake will not be able to enter into eternal life, and in order to hasten to the fountain of life and drink the heavenly beverage which you distribute to all those who are thirsty, while you cause water to flow for them from your side, which is the spring which the spear (of the soldier) has opened and caused to jet forth. He who is worthy to drink from it will have a spring of water which will give eternal life." [1]

And Hippolytus of Rome says in his commentary on the Book of Judges : " God clave an hollow in the jaw and there came water thereout,[2] and when the soldier struck the side (of Christ) with a spear the Word that was in Him caused water to come out of it, in order that it might be seen as a spring of perpetual water in those who believe, and in order that those who are thirsty from work might be given eternal drink." [3]

We will also say that the word chalice is commonly used in the sense of a mixture of wine and water, because wine is only referred to as wine while a chalice is referred to by both wine and water mixed together.[4] If you say that the water went down to baptise Adam,[5] the blood also would have gone down to him, because the wood of the cross was fixed above the cranium of Adam. Who has ever baptised with blood and water ? He Himself said : " Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," [6] and : " He will baptise you with water, with fire and with the Holy Spirit." [7] He went down in person and was baptised, and in this He baptised also Adam ; why should He then baptise him another time ? What is there to make water mixed with blood fit for baptism ?

The (Armenians) add : " Since the grapes from which wine is extracted have already absorbed water in the vineyard, wine is in no need of additional water."—Lo, the grains of corn have also absorbed rain in the fields ; do not mix, therefore, water with flour when you make dough. Turn now to the truth and listen to the Doctors who have disclosed it by showing that the communion-cup is to be filled with wine mixed with water. These will suffice.

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xliv., i., 801. [2] Judges xv. 19.
[3] See the " Prefatory note " about the lost works of Hippolytus.
[4] This argument holds good especially in Syriac.
[5] Allusion to an early Christian tradition to the effect that Christ was crucified exactly on the spot where the head of Adam was buried.
[6] John iii. 5. [7] Matt. iii. 11.

CHAPTER VI.

Against the Habits of the Armenians.

Let us now rebuke their ignorance which has hankered after Jewish habits. In the regions of the Great Armenia they sacrifice lambs in the feast of the Passover, and they sprinkle the outside staircases and the thresholds of the doors with their blood; and if any one censures them they answer: "We are immolating our sacrifices to God." It would be good on our part if we taught them that even under the old Law sacrifices were not acceptable. God said through David: "I will not eat the flesh of bulls nor will I drink the blood of he goats,"[1] and: "Because Thou desirest not sacrifices, and Thou delightest not in burnt offerings."[2] And Jeremiah said: "Your burnt offerings are not acceptable to me, nor your sacrifices sweet to me."[3] And Micah said: "The Lord will not be pleased with thousands of rams nor with sacrifices. . . . I have showed thee, O man, what doth the Lord require of thee: to do justice and to love mercy."[4] And Samuel said: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."[5] And Isaiah said: "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed idols."[6]

If sacrifices were rejected under the old Law how much more are they so in the New Testament? Paul said: "Our Passover is Christ who has been sacrificed for us."[7] And he wrote in his Epistle to the Hebrews: "But now in the end of the world He sacrificed Himself once for us in His immolation, etc. So He was once offered for the sake of those who are sanctified through Him for ever."[8] And our Lord said: "Go ye and learn what that meaneth I will have mercy and not sacrifice."[9]

And Cyril (of Alexandria) said in his commentary on Isaiah: "One sacrifice put an end to Levi and his priesthood."[10] And the

[1] Ps. l. 13. [2] Ps. li. 16. [3] Jer. vi. 20.
[4] Mic. vi. 7-8. [5] 1 Sam. xv. 22. [6] Is. lxvi. 3.
[7] 1 Cor. v. 7. [8] Heb. ix. 26-27 (with changes).
[9] Matt. ix. 13. [10] *Pat. Gr.*, lxx., iii., 909.

Theologian said in his discourse on Passover : " Let us sacrifice to God neither young bullocks nor lambs cutting horns but a sacrifice of praise." [1] And in the discourse on the plague of hail he said : " If we could pray Thee to avert the wrath with burnt offerings and sacrifices, Thou wouldst not also have listened to these." And John (Chrysostom) said in his discourse on Palm Sunday : " Blessed be He who came in the name of the Lord to become a sacrifice on the wood of the cross and to put an end to all sacrifices." [2] And in his discourse on the betrayal (of Judas) he said : " The lamb was the symbol of another and spiritual lamb, and the first sheep were also shadows of the truth, and when the sun of righteousness appeared the shadows disappeared." [3] And John said : " Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." [4] And Paul said : " He by himself purged our sins." [5]

How then do you cleave to the sacrifices of lambs like the Jews ? The sacrifice of lambs has no utility after the coming of Christ who abolished it. Moses said that he that eateth the sacrifice of lambs without having been circumcised, " that soul shall be cut off from among his people ; " [6] you should, therefore, after having adopted the habit of sacrificing lambs, adopt also that of circumcising yourselves !

The (Armenians) have also another habit : " When they wish to sacrifice lambs they bless salt with prayers and canticles as if to sanctify the sacrifices with it. Against this we will say :

The sanctity of the salt is attached to the blood in the same way as the body and the blood of Christ are attached to His soul. Now since the soul of a beast is its blood,[7] how do you allow dogs to eat first the sanctity of the salt which is attached to the blood ? [8] You

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 656.

[2] *Pat. Gr.*, ii. This quotation does not seem to be found verbatim in John Chrysostom's homily on Palm Sunday as printed in *Pat. Gr.*, lix., viii., 706-708 and lxiii, xii, 818-822. The idea conveyed by it is, however, very frequently expressed in the writings of this Father, and even something like a verbal quotation can be singled out in his writings. See the index in lxiv., xiii., 134.

[3] *Pat. Gr.*, xlix., ii., 379.

[4] John i. 29. [5] Heb. i. 3. [6] Exod. xii. 48.

[7] Many ancient philosophers believed the soul to reside in the blood. Cf. Aristotle, *De animâ*, i., 2; also Leviticus xvii. 18; and see Ibn Rabban's *Book of Religion and Empire*, p. 82 of my edition.

[8] In the East the beasts are slaughtered in a place where dogs are allowed to come and lick their blood.

should first allow your priests to partake of the sacrifices and not the dogs! Moses did not bless salt but sprinkled blood on the people, and you allow blood which has been blessed by salt to be eaten by dogs, and perform the sacrifice of the body of Christ without salt! You bless salt at the sacrifice of oxen and lambs and you make them eat it, but the great sacrifice which seasoned the unsavouriness of the world you perform without salt while you honour the sacrifice of sheep and lambs with salt!

If a dog enters a church they pretend that it has been desecrated and the holy chrism has disappeared from it, and here the dogs partake of blood by gulping it, before their Bishops! Moses sprinkled blood on the people in order that they might be purified of their sins by it, and he did not recite any prayers over salt; you, however, loosen your tongue to pray over the salt, and leave the blood to whom the salt is attached to be licked by dogs!

What do the Armenians say here? They say: "Who gave you the power to bless an object which has been desecrated and in which a mouse has fallen?" Against them we will say:

And who gave you the power to absolve and to wipe off the dirt of sin for a small consideration? A spiritual[1] blessing is more sublime and higher than a corporeal[2] blessing, as the soul is higher than the body. Our Lord said: "Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."[3] The word "whatsoever" is all-embracing, and in using it our Lord did not leave out anything. If you are unable to purify the uncleanness of a mouse, you have not the power to absolve anything, and in this case you contradict God who said "whatsoever," because you say "yes" for some things and "no" for some others.

They say in this connection that the object that has been desecrated should be broken up and its contents thrown away,[4] and that if they eat a polluted thing unknowingly they do not sin.[5] Against them we will say:

[1] Cod. "Corporeal." [2] Cod. "spiritual." [3] Matt. xviii. 18.

[4] The author presupposes a good knowledge of all the things that desecrate a sacred object. We cannot here enter into detail concerning the complicated Syrian legislation on the subject. Such a legislation may be found in some liturgical MSS., and a very short summary of it only is reproduced by Barhebræus in his *Nomocanon*, pp. 46-47 (edition Bedjan).

[5] The author possibly wishes here to emphasise the fact that the ignorance of the law is no excuse for breaking it.

There is, therefore, no condemnation for the pagans who sin without knowledge, and those who crucified the Son are not to be blamed because they did not know that they were crucifying Him. Such sayings are foolish and like old women's tales, because it is much better that a man who has been defiled without his knowledge should go to a priest who would bless water for him and give him to drink from it.

In this connection they do another thing which is ludicrous : if the objects that have been desecrated are made of gold, silver, brass or iron they simply purify them with fire, but if they are made of clay they break them up. If fire can purify and bless, you should purify everything with it, and you should also heat with it wine, honey and oil so that uncleanness should flee from them. They purify precious objects with fire, but those that are not precious and those that are made of clay they break up ! They bestow more power of purification on a natural thing like fire than on their priests ! They strain at gnats and swallow camels ![1] They are eager to effect bodily and external purifications but they show no care in purifying themselves of the internal sins ! There is no power that can effect purifications from external and internal impurities like the power that God granted to priesthood. We will add that impurity[2] being an invisible thing fire and water cannot purify it ; but Satan being also invisible commits and teaches men to commit real impurity and sin.

Furthermore, tell us whose creature is the mouse ? If you say that it is the creature of the Devil you will be Manicheans who believe in two Supreme Beings, one who created good and the other evil. If you confess the truth and say that it is the creature of God. all that God created is very good as Moses said ;[3] and how can you decide that it is defiled ? God abhorred the impurity of the flesh and of the spirit, that is to say of the body and of the soul, such as fornication, murder and theft, but not the impurity of the mouse ! And how is it that you can purify the great uncleanness of the soul, and your priests are unable to purify the uncleanness of a mouse !

Again tell us whether the uncleanness of the mouse emanates from its nature or its free-will. If you say that it is from its nature Moses

[1] Matt. xxiii. 24.
[2] The author is naturally speaking here of moral and spiritual impurity.
[3] Gen. i. 31.

will rebuke you because he wrote that everything that God created is very good ; and if you answer that it is from its free-will, free-will has only been given to angels and men and not to animals and mice, because wherever there is free-will there is also justification and sin ;[1] and if the priests absolve the free-will that has sinned, where is it written that a mouse had sinned so that the same priests were powerless to bless the place in which it had fallen ? It is time now to show them whence we got the habit of blessing a defiled object :

Paul said in his Epistle to Timothy : " Every creature of God is good, and nothing is defiled if it be received with faith, for it is sanctified by the power of God and prayer."[2] It is from this that we received our habit to bless an object in which a mouse is drowned.

And he said in his Epistle to the Romans : " I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself : but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."[3] And he wrote in his Epistle to Titus : " Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure ; even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."[4] And in his Epistle to the Corinthians he said : " Whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no question for conscience sake."[5] And our Lord said : " Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man ; but that which cometh out of him."[6]

St. John Chrysostom writes thus in the twelfth discourse of his commentary on the first Epistle to Timothy : " *If it is God's creature it is good*, because everything was very good (Gen. i. 31). In saying ' God's creature ' he meant all things that are eaten, because he had long ago confuted the heresy of those who introduce uncreated matter and who affirm that those eatable things are from this matter. If it is good, what is the meaning of ' it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer ' ? It is plain that what is unclean is sanctified. This, however, is not the case, as he is here speaking against those who held that there was a creature unclean in itself. He laid down two propositions, the first of which is that there is no creature unclean in itself, and the second is that even if it is unclean, you have a remedy for it : make the

[1] Lit. impurity. [2] 1 Tim. iv. 4. [3] Rom. xiv. 14.
[4] Tit. i. 15. [5] 1 Cor. x. 27. [6] Matt. xv. 11.

sign of the cross, give thanks, glorify God and all the uncleanness will flee."[1]

You are put to shame by this quotation, because he said that even if an object becomes unclean you have a remedy in your hands, which consists of the sign of the cross, prayer and praise of God, and through it all uncleanness flees. These will suffice here.

CHAPTER VII.

Against the Habits of the Armenians.[2]

They have a very bad, nay even diabolical, habit: they re-baptise any (Christian) who leaves his creed and follows theirs. The early Fathers did not teach us to re-baptise all those who are converted from any heresy, with the exception of those that are converted from the heresy of Arius, Sabellius, Macedonius and Paul of Samosata. These last converts they have ordered us to re-baptise. As to those who are converted from the heresy of Photinus they have only ordered us to consecrate with the holy Chrism,[3] and they have not permitted us either to re-baptise or to confirm those who come to us from the heresy of the Nestorians or that of the Chalcedonians or that of Julian who believes in the doctrine of the Phantasiasts. If these abjure the doctrine from which they have been converted and give us a written document that they will follow our doctrine, they are immediately received through the prayer of a Bishop; and after two years they partake of our Sacrament.

We wrote fully about these in our controversial work against the Chalcedonians, who having abandoned the path of duty re-baptise any one who follows their doctrine (and thus carry away everybody) like a flood which carries away everything.

Further, while Moses made use of ointments and olive oil, and the Fathers of the New Testament of a perfumed olive oil,[4] and our Fathers of olive oil mixed with balsam, they make use of the oil of

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, lxii., xi., 559.

[2] A marginal note is to the effect: "On the fact that the Armenians re-baptise anyone who follows their doctrine, like the Chalcedonians."

[3] *I.e.* to confirm.

[4] The compounds of this perfumed olive oil are enumerated in Barhebræus, *Nomocanon*, p. 30 (edition Bedjan).

sesame against all canons and all orders. When they are censured by the bulk of Christendom over the fact that they have abandoned olive oil which is praised in the Books both of the Old and the New Testaments, they excuse themselves by saying: "There is no olive oil in Armenia, which is a cold country in which no olive trees can grow." This is the reason they give for using oil of sesame in their holy Chrism.

If there are no olive trees in Armenia they are found in the regions of Neo-Cæsarea which is in close proximity to Armenia. Lo, your people have taken possession of Syria,[1] why then did not your Bishops who are in it make use of olive oil? We Syrians who live in Melitene and in the North have also no olive oil and opobalsam that comes from Egypt, but we import them with great care and make use of them in the sacrament of the holy Chrism.

Tell us now this: Christ said to His disciples, "Baptise all peoples in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," why then you who believe like us in the Trinity re-baptise those who had once been baptised in its name? Whence did you receive this? If you answer: "From the Apostles," lo Paul says: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"[2] and if you add: "From the Fathers," lo the Council of Nicea justified only one baptism. Baptism is the figure of the death and of the burial of Christ and of His remaining three days in the tomb, while the three immersions designate the mystery of these three days, as Paul said: "As many of us as were baptised into Christ were baptised into His death, and are buried with Him in baptism."[3] It has been called a second birth because it justified us as if we were born afresh; and it is one because it is the mystery of death, and inasmuch as those who will rise from the dead will not die, there is likewise no second baptism. You stand, therefore, against the truth when you re-baptise those who had been baptised in (the name of) the Trinity and in the death of Christ.

They have another bad habit: they do not allow anybody to sleep in their Church, be he sick or in health; nor do they allow a cat to enter into it, all under the pretence of cleanness.[4] Against them we will say this:

[1] North and North-West Syria and Cilicia.

[2] Ephes. iv. 5. [3] Rom. vi. 3-4.

[4] The author means by this that a cat is considered, by the Armenians, to be an unclean animal, and if it enters into their Churches they believe that it desecrates them.

What did Christ carry on His shoulders? A man or a Church built of stones? If He carried a man,[1] how could a Church drive away what Christ carried on His shoulders? A Church is a congregation of the faithful and not stones and buildings. This is known by the fact that it is said: "Salute the Church that is in your house."[2] Here "church" designates the men and women who were assembled in the house, and not the building. Our Lord implied the same about the man who fell among thieves and whom (the Samaritan) set on his own beast and brought to an inn and confided to the innkeeper.[3] The readers of Sacred Books know that Christ refers by the word inn to the Church, and by the word innkeeper to the priest, and by the man who fell among thieves to Adam who was stricken with infirmity by his falling into the hands of the demons, and by the word Samaritan to Himself. Now rise against Christ and say to Him: "Why did you bring inside the Church the sick man whom you should have left outside? As an inn admits everybody, good or bad, so also the Church is an asylum for all men. Indeed, where is the mother who shrinks from her children and avoids them? As to cats, if you do not allow them to enter into the Church, why do you allow then the mice which are unclean to enter into it?

They err also in another point: they do not permit a layman to read the Gospel.

Tell us where you learned this. It is indeed not suitable for laymen to read publicly the Gospel for the congregation, as a priest does; but if a believer reads it for himself and takes benefit from it, why do you deprive him of such a grace? It is Satan who has taught this habit in order that no utility should accrue to weak people from living words. Our Lord ate with publicans and sinners, and you condemn His words to the faithful! The penitent woman anointed His head and sat at His feet, and you hide His words from the Christians! In this you go against Him.

Listen now to St. John Chrysostom how in the second discourse of his Commentary on Matthew he speaks against you and allows laymen to read the Gospel. A layman who was excusing himself by saying: "I cannot read the Books because I have the burden of a

[1] *Cf.* Luke xv. 5, where according to the exegesis of many Fathers the sheep carried by the shepherd (= Christ) symbolises a human being.

[2] Col. iv. 15, where "his house." [3] Luke x. 30-37.

wife and children," this Doctor rebuked and then admonished as follows: "When you are about to hold the Gospel in your hands, do not hold it before you have washed your hands, lest you should underrate the power of its words."[1]

They sin in another and worse thing: they pretend that the faithful are not allowed to recite the Lord's prayer, which is the sole prerogative of the priests.

Against them we will say: laymen would not, therefore, be allowed to be baptised! Any baptised person who by baptism has become the son of the Father and the brother of Christ is obliged to recite the Lord's Prayer. If he is not a son and does not call God a father, he would not even be baptised. Lo, pagans and Jews cannot recite the Lord's prayer because they have not received the baptism. You have received this (doctrine) from Satan who is pained and grieved in seeing the degree of honour to which the Christians have been raised.

Listen now to what St. John Chrysostom says in the fourteenth discourse of his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans; "Did they not also call God father? Do you not hear Moses saying: "Thou hast been unmindful of God who begat thee,"[2] or Malachi saying also, "God who created you is one and one father to you all?[3] We all priests, laymen and slaves, have been ordered to pray in this way and to utter this word, after this wonderful travail and after this ineffable birth."[4]

They have also a habit that savours of paganism: they forbid communion to the faithful for a long time, and for this reason their faithful are in a continual state of sin, and Satan seeing that they are precluded from participation in the Sacrament comes with his wicked demons and constantly tortures them and invites them to passion.

As to us, basing our assertion on the testimony of Holy writ, we say that a Christian should not be precluded from communion. It is not good, however, for him to partake of it if he is unworthy of it.

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, lvii., 29.

[2] Deut. xxxii. 18.

[3] Mal. ii. 10. The Greek text and the verse of Malachi have the first pers. plur. "who created us" and "father to us all," and read thus: "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?"

[4] *Pat. Gr.*, lx., ix., 527.

They rejoin: We are not worthy to partake of it at all times.—If you are not worthy of it to-day, show us when you will be. Every day we live we add sins to our sins, and there is no man that would be pure (before God) even if he were to live one hour only. The sun and the stars are not pure before Him. Paul calls himself "off-scouring,"[1] and David "a worm,"[2] and Abraham "dust."[3] As the body is not able to live without bread, so the soul is not able to live without communion.[4] As blank parchment has no honour, but when a royal edict is written upon it, it is called "a royal edict," so also when a man receives communion he is called the temple of the Lord Christ. As the one who receives baptism is called the son of the Father, so also the one who receives communion is united to Christ. As a piece of bread that is thrown into wine imbibes it, so also the one who partakes of the Sacrament imbibes holiness and life from the holy communion.

That communion is a protector to the faithful is taught by Cyril of Alexandria in the second chapter of his commentary on John: "Be not amazed at this and say not within thyself in a Jewish fashion, "How?" Rather think that as water which is cold by nature when put in a pan and placed on fire not only forgets its nature but even surpasses the nature of the element that overcame it, so also we who although corruptible because we are of the nature of flesh, yet in our union with the Sacrament we leave our weakness and turn towards a higher life."[5]

And St. John Chrysostom says in the eighth discourse of his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews: "A great many partake of this sacrifice once a year, and some others twice, and some others frequently. My discourse concerns all of them. Which of them shall I praise more? Those who do it once, or those who do it frequently, or those who do it rarely? Neither those who do it rarely, nor those who do it once, nor those who do it often, but those who have a pure conscience, and those who have a pure heart, and those who have a blameless conduct. Let such as these receive communion at all times."[6]

The (Armenians) entangle themselves and fall into the pit in

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 13. [2] Ps. xxii. 6. [3] Gen. xviii. 27.
[4] The far-reaching consequences of this sentence should be noted.
[5] *Pat. Gr.*, lxxiii., vi., 580. [6] *Pat. Gr.*, lxiii., xii., 131.

another thing : they baptise the crosses and the bells ; a thing that is not found in Holy Writ.

Christ said to the Apostles : "Go ye and teach all nations and baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] We are distinguished from pagans by this sign of baptism. And Paul said : "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ."[2] Crosses and bells put on, therefore, Christ ; a thing abhorrent to the truth. Further : "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom (of Heaven)."[3] The crosses and the bells which are baptised are, therefore, being prepared to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; a thing remote from the truth. Further : "We have received adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father."[4] You call, therefore, the crosses and the bells which you baptise the children of God ; a thing that could not possibly be right. Again, we became brothers of Christ by baptism. The crosses and the bells which you baptise are, therefore, brothers of Christ ; who can accept this ?

The Cross perfects the sacraments of the Church, and if it is not perfect it is not a cross ; but a cross does not give anything to another cross, in the same way as a bishop cannot give anything to another bishop nor a priest to another priest, because they are equal in their divine gift ; and as all the sacrifices of the Church are sanctified by the body that was nailed to the Cross, so also all crosses are sanctified by the Cross that was set up on Golgotha, and they do not need to be baptised nor impressed with the holy Chrism.

St. Basil said in his discourse on the forty martyrs : "The honour offered to an image redounds on its archetype."[5] The honour, therefore, offered to the Cross of the Crucifixion extends to all other crosses as their archetype, and they do not need to be baptised. If a cross needed baptism all the icons, the images and the Gospel[6] would also be in need of it. As Moses[7] baptised plates and pots so also do the Armenians with crosses and bells, and give names to inanimate objects as if they were animate. The pagans

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19. [2] Gal. iii. 27. [3] John iii. 3.
[4] Rom. viii. 15. [5] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxi., iii., 510.
[6] *I.e.* the book of the Gospel; the author speaks here of the objects found on the altar.
[7] Read *de-Mūshé*. Moses means here "the Jews."

honoured graven images of idols by ascribing to them the name of God, and the Armenians give names of saints to crosses !

But they retort : " Why do you consecrate altars and not crosses ? " —Against them we will say :

Everything that has an archetype is called an image, but the churches and the altars because they have no archetype are consecrated, and become an archetype to themselves. As to a cross, because it has an archetype, it is called an image. This is the reason why no image of saints and no Gospels are to be consecrated. When we kiss[1] a cross or an image of saints or the Gospel, we go up in our thought to Christ and to the wood of the Cross on which He was crucified, and it is Him[2] that we kiss. Likewise, when we kiss the image of a saint, we ascend in our thought to the saint whom it represents, and it is him that we kiss in spirit. So also we do not kneel before the parchment on which the Gospel is written but before the divine words written on it. Those, therefore, who baptise a cross and call it by the name of this or that saint are to be censured. As to us we only know one Cross, and that of Christ, who was lifted on it ; and we shall never give it to the name of another. Let this subject end here.

CHAPTER VIII.

Against the Habits of the Armenians.

The Armenians again ask us : " Why do you not administer *Khustuvanutin*,[3] that is to say confession, like us ? "—Against them we will say :

We also have confession of sins, but we make use of it as it should be and not for a consideration. Confession was first preached by John the Baptist, because it is written that the Pharisees went out to him confessing their sins.[4] He who sins, repents and confesses his sin does something good, but if he returns afterwards to the same sin, constantly falling and rising, and, as it were, demolishing and building,

[1] Read *nashḳīnan*. [2] Or " it."

[3] The Armenian word for confession. The confession spoken of here is the canonical or semi-public confession and not the secret and auricular confession which is not found in eastern churches. [4] *Cf.* Matt. iii. 7.

he resembles the dogs whose habit is to turn to their own vomit again, and the sows that were washed to their wallowing in the mire.[1] A confession should be a true one, as David did, because after having confessed his sin he committed it no more. So also did Manasseh, and the penitent woman, and Simon the head of the Apostles, and the publicans, the adulteresses and the good malefactor. The book[2] says : " Do not rely on the remission of sins and add sins to sins."

We say, therefore, that confession is good and profitable, because, " If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us."[3] And : " I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord."[4] And : " Confess your faults one to another."[5] He who confesses his sins and ceases to commit them God will have pity on him, but it is imperative that the confession should be before a wise physician and before experienced brethren who can bring help. Indeed if a man does not disclose his ailment to a physician it will not be cured. He who wishes from his whole heart to be cured has to obey the spiritual physician in order that his healing may be speedily effected. If, however, he goes to the confession of his sins by force of habit only and not with real zest, he will not be cured. That the confession of the Armenians is done by force of habit and not with real desire to better themselves is borne out by the fact that one of them confesses himself[6] repeatedly and immediately after goes and commits a sin greater than the first.

They object also : " Why do you wash your hands in the Church before the offertory ? "[7]—Against them we will say :

This act has a mystery attached to it, and St. Dionysius wrote about it in the second discourse of his book to the effect that when the priest washes the tips of his fingers before the performance of the sacrament, he shows that he is not yet freed from the dirt of sin. Lo, he wipes off from him all dirt before the great sacrifice in order that he may execute his priestly office with purity before the Lord of purity.[8] He washes also His hands after having offered the sacrifice, because as he takes off the vestments of priesthood so he washes his hands lest they should touch something that is incongruous. Which

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 22. [2] Which book? [3] 1 John i. 9.
[4] Ps. xxxii. 5. [5] James v. 16.
[6] Lit. " gives confession." [7] Lit. " before offering."
[8] *Pat. Gr.*, iii., i., 440, 465.

of us two is to be praised ? We who wash our hands in the Church or you who wash yours in the plate from which you eat your cooked food ?

Let us now come to another nonsense of theirs. They say : "Why do you separate the festivals of the Nativity and of the Epiphany which were in ancient times held in one day ?"—Against them we will say :

Lo, Lent was in the Apostolic times observed after the festival of the Epiphany, and the Fathers of the Council of Nicea [1] ordered it to fit with the Passion Week. You, therefore, who love ancient things, leave the new Festival and cleave to the old one. Further, in the Apostolic times Palm Sunday and the Saturday of the Passion were only observed once in thirty years ; you should, therefore, wait also thirty years before observing Palm Sunday and the Saturday of the Passion. The Apostle said : "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good." [2] We ought to hold the festival of the Nativity before that of Baptism [3] because thirty years elapsed from the time of the birth of our Lord to that of His baptism.

Everything that is beset with doubt can be cleared up and confirmed either from the habits of the people, or from the Book, or from nature. From nature : this happens in such matters as conception, birth, and growth ; from habits : this happens in such matters as the art of a carpenter or a goldsmith ; from the Book : such as in the sentence : "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ." [4] The knowledge from both nature and Book is related to the senses, and to the words of Book alone faith is necessary.

Now from the habits of the people we know that we should first observe the Nativity and then the baptism of our Lord, because one is first born and afterwards brought to baptism. And from Book we know that our Lord was born on the twenty-fifth of December. Luke wrote that Gabriel was sent in the sixth month,[5] and he also said that

[1] Lit. "of 318."

[2] 1 Thes. v. 21.

[3] In the Eastern Churches the festival of the Epiphany is exclusively devoted to the baptism of our Lord at which the three persons of the Trinity revealed themselves. This is the reason why it is called the Festival of the Revelation or Apparition. The festival is not connected in the Syrian Churches with any other thing (such as the arrival of Wise Men) as it is in the Western Churches.

[4] Matt. i. 1.

[5] Luke i. 26.

it was the sixth month of the conception of John.[1] On the eleventh of October both the solar and lunar computations were equal, and if you count from the eleventh of October to the twenty-fifth of March there will be six months. On the twenty-fifth of March the moon had ten days, and from the twenty-fifth of March to the twenty-fifth of December on which our Saviour was born, there are nine lunar months. His conception was on the tenth of the lunar month and His birth on the sixth, as Saint Ephrem said: "On the tenth was His conception and on the sixth His birth." On the twenty-fifth of March, therefore, the day in which the blessed (Virgin) had her annunciation, the moon was in its tenth day, and on the twenty-fifth of December, the day in which (Christ) was born, the moon was in its sixth day as Saint Ephrem asserted.[2]

Down to the time of the Emperor Arcadius and of St. John Chrysostom the two feasts were held on the same day in Palestine, and in the countries of the North, but in the West they held them separately as it is done in our days. When this last and good habit came to the East all peoples followed it, and consequently a considerable number of people held the two feasts separately. The Theologian bears witness to this as he has written a special homily for each of them, and he says in his discourse on *Theophany* as follows: "We have before this observed the festival of the Nativity."[3]

Further, since the Nativity is the beginning of all the Divine Economy, and the Evangelists begin their narrative with our Lord's birth, and afterwards with His Baptism, why are you perplexed and why do you say that the Nativity and the Epiphany fall on the same day? Even in a thousand years the twenty-fifth of December will not be the sixth of January!

They also say to us: "Why do you not burn frankincense in Churches? Lo, the wise men offered frankincense to Christ."[4]

[1] Luke i. 36.

[2] We cannot test these dates scientifically as we do not know the precise year of the birth of Christ.

[3] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 314.

[4] Matt. ii. 11. The frankincense spoken of by the Evangelists is of the variety called *olibanum*, although it has not been scientifically identified even in our days. This is also the case with the ancient frankincense used by the Jews.

Against them we will say :—

The wise men brought frankincense and myrrh according to their pagan habit, because pagans were then in the habit of offering frankincense to their gods, but the Fathers of the Church ordered us to burn compound incense, and compound incense symbolises Christ who is composed of Divinity and humanity. If you wish to burn frankincense like the wise men you should mix with it myrrh and gold and burn it in this way. See, however, how Isaiah rebukes you as he rebuked the Jews because he says : "He who burns frankincense is like the one who worships idols." [1] And Saint Cyril says in the first discourse of the second part of his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews : "*We have a high priest*[2] . . . see the way of the priesthood of our Saviour. We do not find Him making use of the sacrifices of oxen and frankincense, like the priests under the law of Moses." [3]

The Children of Togarma [4] say also to us : "Why do you cross yourselves with one finger only ?"—Against them we will say :

Make a figure of the Cross on the wall or on the earth, and you will see that you will do it with one finger only and that you are like us. If you do it with three fingers or with five, you will be like one who beats lentils or the axis of water-wheels with his hands.[5] If you pretend that three fingers are the symbol of the Trinity, know that the Trinity was not crucified. What utility would accrue to a man who is full of iniquity and crooked in his faith whether he makes the sign of the Cross with two fingers or with three or with one ? It is purity of intention that God requires of us.

Listen now to John Chrysostom who bears witness to this in the fifty-fourth discourse of his commentary on Matthew : "You are bought with a price paid on your behalf, and it does not fit you to be the servant of any man. (Paul) alludes by the word 'price' to the Cross. We should not make the sign of the Cross with the finger in

[1] Is. lxvi. 3 (Peshitta). The author's quotation holds good especially in Syriac. He was evidently quoting from memory because he uses the verb "worships" for "blesses" found in Isaiah.

[2] Heb. iv. 14.

[3] Fragments only are left of Cyril's commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. *Cf. Pat. Gr.*, lxxiv., vii., 970-975.

[4] The Armenians.

[5] Expressions that mean doing something difficult and queer.

a simple way."[1] See how he does not say with your "fingers" in plural but with a "finger."

Further, Moses did not smite the sea with his rod lengthwise and breadthwise three times or twice, but once only lengthwise and another time breadthwise.[2] In this he symbolised the mystery of the sign of the Cross which we should make with one finger only. We wrote at length on this subject in our controversial work against the Chalcedonians and in the special treatise that is found at the end of our work on *Confession*.

Also about their[3] eating oil in Lent.—Against them we will say:

Lo, your laymen drink also wine in Lent! We will show here only your strange habits of fasting. You do not eat in a utensil where there was food cooked with oil of walnut, but you eat olive oil! You do not eat raisins and vinegar, but you eat ground sesame,[4] and *maḥṣūr!*[5] You eat that which gives birth to oil, but you do not eat its effect! Every one knows that ground sesame is as fat as olive oil. You leave out vinegar which is acid, but you eat sumac and pomegranates which are also acid! You do not eat raisins, but you eat dried figs and other dried fruits! You strain at gnats, but you swallow camels![6] Since you follow the Old Testament, like its Nazarites, eat meat in Lent!

In the Armenian Bible wherever the word "oil" is mentioned, it is translated by "fat." This happened to them through the incompetence of the translators. And instead of saying in their baptism: "So-and-so is impressed with the holy *Chrism*"[7] they say: "with fat!" In this they go against the Sacred Books. Indeed oil comes

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, lviii., 537. Barsalībi quotes also this passage in his treatise against Rabban Ishō which I edited and translated in the first volume of my *Woodbrooke Studies*, p. 20.

[2] Where is this found? The famous East Syrian Doctor, Narsai, states in this connection that in laying down his rod and then lifting it up Moses was making the sign of the cross. When lying down the rod could work no miracles, but when it was lifted up its active power returned to it. See my edition of the works of Narsai in my *Narsai Homiliæ et Carmina*, vol. ii., pp. 123-124.

[3] Lit. your.

[4] *Taḥin.* This dish is used even in our days in many parts of Syria and Mesopotamia.

[5] A kind of Oriental dish made of oil of sesame.

[6] Matt. xxiii. 24.

[7] Lit. oil.

out of trees and shrubs, while fat comes out of animals such as sheep and cows.[1] These will suffice.

CHAPTER IX.

Against the Armenians.

The Armenians further gabble and say : " Why at the time of the Offertory do you open the doors of the Church before everybody to enter ?—Against them we will say :

In the Apostolic times there were five categories of people, who used to go out of church gradually, as we have demonstrated in our book entitled *Rudiments and on the Spiritual and Corporeal Natures*.[2] Now, however, because the righteous are mixed with the sinners and the good with the bad, if we impede people from listening to the living words, they will be completely lost. Indeed, it is by hearing these words that they will repent, and then little by little offer (ecclesiastical) penitence and be worthy of participation in the holy Sacrament. You resemble a man who seeing his friend falling into quagmire, instead of coming and pulling him up, he presses him deeper down up to his neck !

Let us examine the ignorance of the Armenians further and see how unenlightened it is. The Divine Chrism, with which we are ordered to sign rational beings in baptism, they use as a remedy for wounds ! And also they come to (receive) it after they have eaten and drunk ! And also they throw it in rivers, and place horses and donkeys in file in these same rivers so that their wounds should be healed by it ! The holy Chrism that has been given to human beings, lo, ignorant people give to irrational beasts !

The Armenians consecrate their Churches like all others, because this symbolises the Tabernacle, and as faith is one and baptism is one so also the consecration of the Church is one, but they pretend that if a dog or a cat enters into them the holy Chrism flees from them, and they need reconsecration. They do not know that in this fact consecration does not flee from the Church, which, through the

[1] The above sentences are written also on the margins of the MS. but the copyist rightly remarks in Arabic : " This is written redundantly."

[2] See also above.

prayer that is recited in it, is spiritually renovated by the holy Chrism." [1]

They perform another unlawful act : they baptise after they have eaten.

How are they not ashamed to bless the water of baptism after they have drunk ? As the Eucharistic sacrifice is not offered, without fasting, so also baptism is not performed without fasting, because it is the Spirit who comes down on the Eucharistic elements who blesses also (the water of) baptism.

They do another thing : their bishops and their monks eat meat with avidity, and say that beef and fish are on equal footing and are one and the same thing.

If they are right in this and if all meat is one, why do they not eat horse flesh or asinine flesh ? And why do they not understand the words of the Apostle who says : " There is one flesh of fishes, another of birds and another of beasts." [2] And at the beginning of His message our Saviour made use of different kinds of food, and ate meat and thus followed the habit of mankind. He also ate after His resurrection, while He was in no need of food, in order to prove to the Apostles that He had truly risen, but He made use of the monastic food in partaking of fish, bread, and wine, and in this He began the monastic life for us. The Armenians have, therefore, no monks in reality but in name only.

The Theologian said about them as follows : " I do not find that the Armenians are a simple and open race, but rather a secretive and deceitful one." [3] This is borne out by the fact that " they bless with their mouth and curse in their heart." [4] The same Gregory testifies about St. Basil that he never ate meat in his monastic and episcopal life. " He had only one shirt and one mantle ; a bed on the ground, and vigils ; and a body in an unwashed state [the sources of his pride], and that ineffable supper with viands, which consists of the new condiment of bread and salt, and that non-intoxicating and universal beverage furnished to us by the springs." [5]

Although fish looks outwardly like meat, yet in the realm of

[1] Or : " which is renovated by the Holy Spirit."
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 39 (with slight changes).
[3] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 518. [4] Ps. lxii. 4.
[5] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 575.

nature it comes between vegetables and flesh of animals. Its life is in water like that of grass and trees, and its death is caused by the absence of water as is also the case with corn and grass, and in spite of the fact that in its taste it is higher than vegetables, it is much lower than the flesh of animals. A lamb and an ox are living beings, and it is very unbecoming for a dead man to eat a living being. Indeed a monk is dead to all passions, and this is the reason why the Doctors have enacted that monks should not come near living food.

In the first book of Clement it is written that bishops should abstain from meat : " The Bishop should not eat meat at all, not because it is blameworthy for him to taste it or to eat it, but on moral considerations [1] arising from the fact that since he is wishing to weaken his body he should not seek that which strengthens it and gives too much life to it." [2] St. John Chrysostom said in the sixty-ninth discourse of his commentary on Matthew : " And their table is also free from all excess and is full of much wisdom. They have no streams of blood, no chunks and big pieces of meat, no condiments, and no delicacies." [3] And Basil said in his letter to Julian : "The art of a chef is non-existent with us. Our knife has no relation to blood, as our food consists of blades of grass, very dry bread and wine that has turned sour." [4]

Further, their priests believe, like the Jews, that pork is unclean and do not taste it.—If this were so why then do you allow your laymen to eat it ?—They retort : " Who allowed you to eat pork ? " —Against them we will say :

It is true that the sons of Shamuni [5] gained spiritual victory because they did not eat it, but it is said that James the brother of our Lord blessed pork and gave it to be eaten. Whatever this may be, if it is unclean why is it eaten by your laymen, and if it is clean why should it not be eaten by your priests ?

They sin in another thing : There is a spiritual affinity which is handed down from John the Baptist, and the Fathers have allowed it to be preserved to future generations because as a spiritual kinship is higher than a carnal kinship, so also spiritual affinity is higher than

[1] Lit. because of mind.
[2] *Rel. Jur. Eccl. Ant.*, p. 10.
[3] *Pat. Gr.*, lviii., 653.
[4] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxii., iv., 345.
[5] A holy woman martyred with her seven children in the time of the Maccabees.

consanguinity. And as the Book has ordered that a man should not have any intercourse with a near relative, in the sense that he should not marry any one who is consanguineous with him, so also the Fathers have ordered that spiritual affinity should be kept and that we should not marry any one with whom we have spiritual affinity. They, however, consider spiritual affinity as nothing and marry those with whom they have it.

They do also some other things that are blameworthy. Paul said: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."[1] The Armenians, whom we see keeping the whole law, should be called new Jews, not in their religion but in their habits: their priests take tithes from the places where corn is thrashed and fruits are pressed, and they have also their share in sheep and cattle with their leather and their skin; they use unleavened bread on Good Friday; they sacrifice lambs at Easter, and sprinkle their blood on the doors; they use unleavened bread for their Eucharist; they do not mix water with wine in their chalice. They do not know that old things are passed away[2] and that instead of Moses we have Christ; instead of the Torah, the Gospel; instead of the Sabbath, Sunday; instead of the circumcision, baptism; instead of the prophets, the Apostles; instead of oxen and lambs, the fattened calf and the true Lamb; instead of manna and azym, the living bread that came down from heaven; instead of the Synagogue, the Church; instead of the land of Judæa, the land of life; and instead of the earthly Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem which we are expecting.

While the Syrians, the Greeks, the Latins[3] and the Copts take the consecrated Host from the chalice with a spoon, the Armenians take it with their fingers. The spoon symbolises the tongs which Isaiah saw in the hands of the Seraph and with which the latter took the live coal, which he laid upon the mouth of the prophet.[4] Lo, in the old Law also they took the flesh of the sacrifice with a fleshhook of three teeth.[5] Further, there are in the world precious objects which people do not touch with hands, but which they hold in their hands after having wrapped them in linen cloth. We also take the con-

[1] James ii. 10. This quotation is not found in a Pauline Epistle as the author erroneously states.

[2] 2 Cor. v. 17.

[3] Lit. the Romans.

[4] Is. vi. 6.

[5] 1 Sam. ii. 13.

secrated Host with a spoon in order that the hands of the priest may not be smeared with (the Eucharistic) blood.

The Fathers have enacted that we should not genuflect on Sundays and in Pentecostal days, as genuflection is an emblem of our fall. The Armenians do not possess this good habit, but out of ignorance they genuflect on Sundays and in Pentecostal days as they do on a Saturday. If we observe the festival of the Resurrection on a Sunday because in it we rose from our fall into sin, how could we genuflect in it? Indeed we should perform prayers in it while standing and say with David: "*Our enemies, the demons*, bent their knees and fell down, but we rose and stood upright."[1]

On the very day of Pentecost, however, when we are given the Holy Spirit, we genuflect because we are unable to bear His sight, and so we bring our faces to the ground and hide them therein. Indeed it is the habit of those who see visions to fall on their faces to the ground; this happened when the face of Jesus shone upon the mountain, and the Apostles fell on their faces.[2] Further, since on this day the Holy Spirit came down and we acquired knowledge of the three persons of the Trinity, we offer a full worship to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

That we ought not to genuflect on Sundays we know from the Canons of the three hundred and eighteen (Fathers)[3] who in the last canon wrote as follows: "Whereas there are individuals who genuflect on Sundays and Pentecostal days; in order to secure a uniform practice for all men the holy Synod has seen fit to order that prayers should be offered to the Lord in a standing posture."[4] And Basil the Great teaches us in the twenty-seventh chapter of his discourse to Amphilochius his uncle as follows: "We perform our prayers on Sundays while standing, but all of us do not know the reason for this: It is not only because having risen with Christ we ought to seek things that are on high—as on the day of Christ's resurrection, while we stand up and pray we bring to the remembrance of our soul the grace that was vouchsafed to us—but also because this day is the image of the world to come. . . . This day is truly one but consists also of eight days, in its reference to the condition that will follow the present

[1] Ps. xx. 8 (Peshitta, with slight changes).
[2] Matt. xvii. 1-6.
[3] Council of Nicea.
[4] Mansi, *Conc. Omn. ampl. Coll.*, ii., 678.

time : to the day which will not end and to which there is no evening, and also to the world which will never grow old. It is necessary, therefore, that the Church should teach its pupils to perform their prayers in it in a standing posture, so that by the constant remembrance of the eternal life we should not forget to prepare our viaticum for our departure to the next world."[1]

That we ought not to genuflect in the Pentecostal days[2] the same St. Basil teaches us in the same Chapter of the same discourse, as follows : "All the Pentecostal days are a remembrance of the resurrection which we are expecting in the world to come. Indeed if that one day is multiplied seven times it will cover the period of the seven hebdomads of the holy Pentecost. In beginning with the first it ends with the last, and so it revolves fifty times for the days that fall between those two days. In this way it possesses the image of eternity, because, as if in a circular motion, it begins and ends with the same signs. That we ought on that day to pray in an erect posture the ecclesiastical canons have taught us, as if to transfer, as it were, our minds from the things of the present to the things of the future"[3]

The Armenians say : "From whom do you descend—you who are Syrians by race ?"—Against them we will say :

Neither you know from whom you descend. The name "Armenian" is derived from "Armenia" which is the name of a country (and not of a person). It is we (Syrians) who have enlightened your authors and revealed to them that you are descending from Togarma, who was from the children of Japhet. As to us Syrians we descend racially from Shem, and our father is Kemuel son of Aram,[4] and from this name of Aram we are also called sometimes in the Books by the name of "Arameans." We are called "Syrians" after the name of "Syrus," who built Antioch with its banlieue ; and the country was called after him, "Syria."[5]

We will bring the following (facts) to the notice of the lovers of knowledge :

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxii., iv., 192.

[2] As stated above the author refers here to the days that follow the first Sunday of Pentecost.

[3] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxii., iv., 192.

[4] Gen. xxii. 21, says that Kemuel was the father and not the son of Aram. This error is also committed by the Syrian lexicographers, and seems to have its origin in the fact that in Gen. x. 22, Aram is given as the son of Shem.

[5] This information seems to be legendary.

It is now four hundred and forty years since the Armenians came into the region of Syria and took possession of our countries, monasteries and villages. We had the Patriarch Mar Athanasius, who in the year one thousand and thirty-seven of the Greeks[1] effected his union with Ohannes their Catholicos[2] in Manasgert[3] of the interior. At that time, since the Kingdom of the Armenians was conquered by the Persians who were holding sway in it, they began to come down little by little to Syria. When the Patriarch Athanasius noticed that all those who came followed either the Chalcedonians or the Julianists because they had neither a priest nor a bishop in Syria, he apprised of this fact the Catholicos Ohannes, who sent three bishops to Syria, and these received every Armenian who came down from Armenia.

And our Patriarch alienated to Ohannes a monastery situated on the frontiers (of Syria and Armenia), and he placed therein Syrian and Armenian boys, who learnt both the Syriac and Armenian languages and translated the works of the Fathers from Syriac into Armenian. After the death of our Patriarch and of their (Catholicos) Ohannes, they broke their engagements and committed injustices against our people. Even the language they use in Armenia does not resemble the one they speak here, because the latter resembles Syriac. After this, little by little they seized our churches and the monasteries situated in the Black Mountain,[4] and after the help that we extended to them they became our adversaries.[5]

They have also another habit which is against both nature and Book. All the festivals of the Divine Economy of the Lord, and all

[1] A.D. 726.

[2] This union of the West Syrian and Armenian Churches is described by Barhebræus, *Chron. Eccl.*, i., 299-304, and more fully by Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, ii., 492-500, where the conditions of the union are also given. About this union see also Stephen Asolik, in *Bibl. de l'École des langues Orient.*, xviii., 131 (edit. Dulaurier), and Stephen Orbélian, *Histoire de la Siounie*, p. 252 (edit. Brosset).

[3] Armenian episcopal see spelt also *Manazgherd*, *Mandzgerd*, etc. The author adds "of the interior" to distinguish this town from another locality of the same name. See Tournebize, *Hist. pol. et relig. de l'Arménie*, pp, 850 and 852 and the pages quoted in them. The *Chronicle* of Michael calls it *Manavazkerd* (p. 496). It was situated on the borders of Hark and Apahunik.

[4] It is the mountain of *Amanus*.

[5] The above historical information is very interesting, especially in its bearing on the translation into Armenian of the works of the Syrian Fathers at the beginning of the eighth century.

the commemorations of saints are celebrated by Christians on the day in which our Lord performed the acts that refer to them, and on the day in which the martyrs earned the crown of martyrdom. The Armenians, however, do not act in this way, but transfer the feasts from the day on which they fall to a Sunday, and on this day they celebrate them, with the exception of the festival of the baptism of our Lord which they celebrate on the sixth of January.

The great Theologian counted it as a loss and a spiritual injury that he missed by one day the commemoration of Cyprian, because he wrote as follows: "Cyprian was about to escape us! What a loss! And you bear it!"[1] See how much it pained St. Gregory that he was not in town, and that he had missed by one day the right day of the commemoration of the Saint, while you celebrate the same commemoration four days after its appointed time!

They have another unlawful habit: among them the priest blesses the bishop and the bishop blesses the Catholicos, and after they have blessed them they in their turn are blessed by them. They do not listen to Paul, who says: "Without contradiction the less is blessed of the better."[2] Tell us now who is better, the bishop or the priest? If the bishop is better, the priest is to be blessed by him and not he by the priest. If you say that both are equal in honour and in ordination, why then does not a priest ordain a deacon or another priest? It is written in the Apostolic Canons that the priest blesses those who are under him, and is blessed by those who are above him.[3]

The discourse of the author, Mar Dionysius, ceases and ends here, after having successively rebuked the Muslims, the Jews, the Nestorians, the Chalcedonians and the habits of the Armenians.[4] And you, O diligent and industrious friend, who asked him to write this work, which has now come to an end according to your expectation, offer a prayer for him, in order that he may be worthy of the joyful meeting with the One who forms the subject of the discussion and for whose sake we are being attacked by the heretics, namely, our Lord and our God Jesus Christ, to whom be praise in conjunction with His Father and His Holy Spirit now, at all time, and for ever and ever! Amen!

[1] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxv., i., 1169. [2] Heb. vii. 7.
[3] De Lagarde's *Rel. Jur. Eccl. Antiq.*, p. 24.
[4] See at the beginning my note about the controversial works of Barṣalibi.

ANSWERS TO THE OBJECTIONS OF THE DISORDERLY ARMENIANS.

Our weak discourse will extend now to the solution of the nauseating objections that the Armenians have expectorated and thrown at our people. They say: "Leaven is from digested food and is mortal and corruptible, while azym is incorruptible."—Against them we will say:

If leaven were from digested food and from filth how is it that our Lord likened the Kingdom of Heaven to it? According to your opinion the Kingdom of Heaven, that is to say the Gospel, the teaching and the preaching of Christ are of digested food! Fie, the ignorant! And St. Paul said: "Let us keep the feast not with old leaven, but with leaven of sincerity and purity."[1] According to your opinion "sincerity" and "purity" are digested food! Let the erring (Armenians) know that leaven is a word of neutral morality[2] like mountain, sun, north and such like, and that it is living. This is borne out by the fact that it expands the dough and imparts motion to it, while azym is dead because it does not expand.

When use is made of the word bread, leavened bread is always meant, while azym is simply called "azym" by the Jews; and in the Gospel, wherever azym occurs, the one who eats it calls it "azym" and not "bread." Our Lord said: "I am the bread of life"[3] and not "azym of life."

But the Armenians rejoin: "The Eucharistic bread[4] that has leaven in it becomes mouldy."—Against them we will say:

Azym also, quâ azym, even if baked in ashes, not only becomes mouldy but also rots, and if it does not become mouldy when small in size, it becomes dry like a stone, which is worse than mouldiness. Further, the oil of sesame from which you compose your holy Chrism very often rots and stinks after its consecration, and no one is able to bear its bad smell. Such an oil would, therefore, not possess the power of the Holy Spirit.

They add: "The wine[5] with which water is mixed turns sour."—Against them we will say:

[1] 1 Cor. v. 8 (Peshiṭta).
[2] Lit. "middle word." About this expression see above.
[3] John vi. 35.
[4] Lit. "Body." See my note above.
[5] Eucharistic wine.

Pagans and sun-worshippers offer in sacrifice pure wine like the (Armenians), and so also do the Jews ; but in spite of that how many barrels of such pure wine turn sour ! It is for this reason that we do not pay attention to the material elements of bread, wine and oil, but we only consider the grace of the Spirit that inhabits and dwells in them. Their baptismal water also if it remains a day or two [1] in the font will begin to rot, and would, therefore, possess no baptismal power !

That the azymous Eucharistic bread is corruptible and mortal is borne out by the fact that it does not remain in its soft and pliable condition, but becomes dry and hard like a stone, so much so that you break it with a knife or with a stone, as one who is killed and dies ; and then you soften it with wine and soak it in it, because of its hardness. In this way it changes and suffers modification first by taking upon itself the nature of stone or of wood, and then by becoming again pliable and soft. In this process it becomes desecrated,[2] on account of its having been softened by a non-consecrated wine.

Further, we will also answer you that since all nations eat leavened bread, they would all be eating digested food ! And you also would be eating every day the digested food of Adam, of the son of Noah and of your wives ![3] Fie, your sad lot, not to say your crass Ignorance ! Your head Tiridates [4] was also a wild boar, and you are, like him, wild boars which are cruel and vicious, and also dirty and filthy like domesticated swine ![5]

The erring Armenians say that we should not mix water with the wine of the chalice.—Against them we will say :

All the Christian nations beside you mix water with the wine of the chalice in order to separate themselves from Jews and pagans. The Fathers bear witness to us on this subject, and John the Evangelist confirms the point by means of the water which, he asserts, came out of the side of our Lord. If you pretend that water came out in order to baptise Adam,[6] we will answer : Adam was baptised twice ;

[1] In the sense of some days.

[2] The author is speaking of a consecrated Host made of unleavened bread.

[3] See above the opinion of the Armenians about the origin of leaven.

[4] In the text *Ṭartaṭ* which is almost identical with the West Armenian pronunciation *Drtad.* See Tournebize, *Histoire de l'Arménie* (passim).

[5] These are harsh expressions. [6] On this subject see above.

he was baptised the first time when our Lord was baptised, and in His baptism He baptised him, because our Lord was baptised for us and for Adam and not for Himself. By putting on the flesh of Adam, He was baptised not for Himself, as we say, but for Adam, and this is the reason why He was called the second Adam. He baptised him for the second[1] time when He saw him wounded, and bound up his wound and poured into them wine and also oil, which symbolises baptism.[2]

That Christ was baptised for us and for Adam, and this in the Jordan, is borne out by the Theologian, who says in his discourse on baptism: "And Christ was baptised at the age of thirty. . . . Since you have said "God" you have solved the question. He was purity itself and was in no need of baptism. He was purified for you in the same way as He put on flesh for you."[3] See how he says that Christ was baptised for us in the Jordan and not on the Cross. If you do not believe this, you will have to admit that He was baptised twice, not counting the baptism of martyrdom,[4] about which He said: "I have a baptism to be baptised with."[5]

Know also that only the cranium of Adam was in Golgotha, and so only his head would have been baptised—indeed, not all his head but only its bones! Who would ever baptise bones or a dead man, save you, who receive also priesthood from a dead hand![6] When you baptise somebody, his head only is baptised and not all his body! And what would you answer Paul who proclaimed one baptism only,[7] while you say that Adam was baptised twice, once in the Jordan and another time on the Cross?[8]

[1] Text: third.

[2] The author refers here to the man who fell among thieves (Luke x. 30-37), and whom he believes to be Adam and his posterity. See above.

[3] *Pat. Gr.*, xxxvi., ii., 400. [4] Lit. murder. [5] Luke xii. 50.

[6] To understand this sentence concerning a dead hand imparting priesthood I would refer the reader to the treatise of the same Barṣalībi against Rabban Ishō', which I edited and translated in my *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. i., pp. 44, although in the present case the dead hand is that of Gregory the Illuminator and not that of the Baptist. This dead hand of the Illuminator is also spoken of below. [7] Eph. iv. 5.

[8] The author asserted above that Adam was baptised twice, once in the Jordan and another time when he fell among thieves and his wounds were healed by the good Samaritan. To save the author from contradiction we must assert that he believes the second baptism to be figurative only and not real. This interpretation is suggested by the tenor of his discourse here and above. Is it possible that for "Adam" we should read "Christ"?

THE ANSWER TO THE SECOND OBJECTION, BY DIONYSIUS.

It is time now to proceed under this head and rebuke the nation of dirty habits. They say: "Because you put leaven in your Eucharistic bread it becomes mouldy."—Against them we will say:

O ignorant people, with us the Eucharistic bread does not remain more than one day, and in case of necessity, not more than seven days. We do not make it in the form of large round loaves, so as to keep a long time and then run the risk of mouldiness and decomposition. You try and make your unleavened bread in the form of large-sized loaves, and you will see how after some days they will swarm with worms! But listen, you people of no understanding: the manna came down from heaven, and David calls it the bread of angels;[1] now if this manna, which the Father sent to the Israelitish nation and which has been called heavenly bread, stank and bred worms as it is written[2] whenever people gathered too much of it—and this in spite of the fact that it contained neither leaven nor salt—the Eucharistic leavened bread also, that is to say, the body (of Christ), even if it becomes mouldy, will not lose its consecration.

Tell us now: Why did the manna suffer decomposition? If you say because it possessed no Divine power, the Torah and the Gospel will give you the lie, especially Paul who said: "And all ate the same food of the Spirit."[3] See how he calls the manna the food of the Holy Spirit. He did not say that after it began to stink it was no more a heavenly bread, as you blasphemously assert. This quotation should rebuke you.

If a lax priest keeps the Eucharistic bread[4] too long it will become mouldy, although, by itself, this Eucharistic bread is neither corruptible nor mortal. This happens firstly in order that it may not be believed to be only a phantasm, and secondly in order that it may not be kept for days, like the manna which was eaten in the day in which it came down, and only kept intact from Friday to Saturday. As Christ after His resurrection showed in His body the print of the nails[5]—although this same body was incorruptible—in order that it may not be believed to be a phantasm of no material reality, so also when the

[1] Ps. lxxviii. 25 (Peshitta).
[2] Ex. xvi. 20.
[3] 1 Cor. x. 3 (Peshitta).
[4] Literally, "body" as usual.
[5] John xx. 25.

Eucharistic bread is kept too long, mouldiness appears in it to show that we are still in the world of corruption.

But as we have shown above, the blasphemers say that because leaven is from the dirt, that is to say the digested food, of Adam—or as some others assert, the digested food of the son of Noah—we do not mix it with the Eucharistic bread.

Fie, the wretched ! What has Satan taught them ! Since you do not know how leaven came into the world, why do you utter a nonsense that turns against you ? If leaven is from digested food, why do you bless the table and make the sign of the Cross over the bread which is laid upon it and which is made of this same leaven ? Do you then eat digested food ? If you say that through thanksgiving, benediction and the sign of the Cross the filth of leaven goes away, you should also admit that by the invocation and power of the Holy Spirit the Eucharistic bread and leaven is blessed, sanctified and changed into the body (of Christ).[1] In the case your prayers and the signs of the Cross over the table had not the power to remove the filth of leaven, you would be eating digested food every day, and the power of this digested food would be so strong as to overcome your benedictions !

Listen now to another thing which you do :[2] Why, when you find a mouse in your food, you throw its flesh away and eat the food into which it had fallen ? We will now put a mouse in one of your hands, and filth, that is to say digested food, in the other, and then take you to all nations and ask them : " Which of these two is more unclean, the mouse or the digested food from which you pretend that leaven is derived ? " All will testify that digested food is more unclean, because it comes out of the bowels, with bad smells caused by vapours and fumes which emanate from an agglomeration of excrements, and that a mouse is a creature of God, like all other creeping animals, the like of which Simon saw in a vessel, and God said to him : " Arise, slay and eat ; what God hath cleansed that make not unclean." [3]

If all (the nations) agree that a mouse is clean, it is only for the

[1] The author in conjunction with all Eastern Fathers believes that the consecratory words in the Mass are those of the *epiclesis* and not those of the *Institution.*

[2] Lit. said.

[3] Acts xi. 7-9.

sake of a man's conscience that we throw it out of the wine into which it had fallen and then bless the same wine. As to you, you bake leaven, or digested food, in the oven, and then put it in your cooked food and eat it! How dirty and filthy you are! Even more so than the napkin of an unclean woman!

Further, why do you not test by an experiment that leaven is from digested food? Whenever you are short of leaven take some of your digested food and make new leaven!

When Christ multiplied bread for the multitudes, the evangelist did not say that there were five loaves of azym, but of bread, from which five thousand ate and were filled.[1] He also fed four thousand from seven loaves of bread,[2] and there is not one commentator who says that those loaves were unleavened but leavened. If Christ blessed leavened bread, why do you then run like Jews after azym?

After having brought testimonies from the Gospel and from the Apostle Paul to the effect that leaven is not an object to be despised and that there is no unclean creature, apart from sin, which enters from outside; and after having shown how the conscience of Peter, who had believed that there was an unclean creature, was set right by the Lord through a sheet full of unclean animals—we will quote Paul who teaches that water is to be mixed with the (Eucharistic) wine. He says: "All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same drink of the spirit, for they drank of that rock of the spirit that followed them."[3] The cloud denotes here the mystery of the Holy Spirit; the sea, that of baptism; the manna, that of the Eucharistic bread; and the drink, that of the Eucharistic wine. All are aware of the fact that that rock was jetting forth water and not wine, and that the rock itself was Christ.[4] Those, therefore, who offer on the altar wine alone without water are in error. Wine and water symbolise the soul and the body which the Word-God assumed, water symbolises His death in the flesh, and wine His life, that is to say His divinity. The Book bears witness to this when it says: "As often as you drink of this cup remember my death."[5] Those who

[1] Matt. xiv. 17-19, etc. [2] Matt. xv. 34-36.
[3] 1 Cor. x. 1-4. [4] 1 Cor. x. 4. [5] 1 Cor. xi. 26.

do not mix water with wine do not remember, therefore, the death of our Lord, and go against the Gospel and Paul.

We ought further to discuss this question with the fledgelings of the crows, the sons of Togarma : The wine which you offer on the altar comes from a vine which was first fed on digested food, and then grew up and gave fruit. Its grapes were afterwards brought to the press where they were trodden out and pressed under the feet of men and boys, and sometimes of women also.[1] It often happens that among those who trod out the wine there were thieves, adulterers, murderers, and perpetrators of many other crimes. After the wine was pressed it was kept in barrels, from which you drew it and offered it in sacrifice. Now tell us this : Who purified the uncleanness of the wine which was pressed under feet that were filthy and full of dirt and sin ? Is it the barrels into which it was poured, or the prayers and the benedictions of the Mass ?[2]

If you answer : the barrel ; your barrels would, therefore, have more merits than your benedictions and your prayers. If you answer that the prayers and the benedictions which are recited over the wine which had been made unclean by dirty feet, sanctify it—you would contradict yourselves and the truth, because if unclean wine, pressed by unclean feet, can be sanctified by prayers, how is it that you are not able to sanctify the wine into which falls a mouse, which is not unclean in its creation and which has no sins ?[3]

We would further say to you : Among animals there are some which are unclean and which eat every filthy thing, such as pigs among beasts, hens among birds, and fishes among reptiles. Now answer us " Yea " or " Nay " : when you eat these, do you also eat the uncleanness that has stuck to them, that is to say, do you eat the saliva that comes out of the mouths and the snouts of the pigs and the mire in which they wallow ? Do you eat reptiles and the flesh of dead animals, such as horses and donkeys ? Do you also eat the dirt which hens eat, and the corpses of men which are eaten by fish along with the filth, the frogs, the crabs and the like which they eat in the sea ? If you answered that you could not bless them with prayers and with the sign of the Cross, you would be unclean like

[1] Even in our days the grapes are pressed with feet in many villages of Kurdistan and Asia Minor.

[2] Lit. of the offering, *i.e.* of the liturgical invocations.

[3] See above what the author says about the Armenians and the mouse.

pigs, hens and fishes ; and if you answered that you blessed them with prayers and with the sign of the Cross, we would be winning victory over you by means of your own weapon, because it is with these same prayers and heavenly benedictions that we bless the leaven that is mixed with the dough, which becomes the body of Christ.

If you add that fire purifies the uncleanness of the flesh of the pigs, the fishes and the hens, the power of fire would then be more effective than that of your prayers, and in this case the uncleanness of leaven would also be purified with this same fire. As to us we sanctify the wine which is mixed with water with thanksgiving and prayer, and it becomes the blood of Christ. And it is also by Divine power and by means of sacerdotal benedictions that we bless every vessel, food or drink into which a mouse falls, and uncleanness flees from it.

We wrote to you[1] in a succinct manner about the objections raised against you by those who strain at gnats and swallow camels.[2] Who is more unclean in the eyes of God : a man who is an adulterer, a thief and a murderer, or an irrational animal against which there is no judgment ?

Against the heresy of Julian in which the Armenians are lying prostrate and of (the errors of) which we only discussed a few for the consideration of some of their notables ; and against the Jewish habits which they are holding, we wrote a complete book. When that book reaches you,[3] you will be able to confute them, especially in the matter of the pagan sacrifices which they offer and in which they indulge. They do not listen to Isaiah who says : " He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man ; he that sacrificeth a lamb as if he cut off a dog's neck ; he that offereth an oblation as if he offered swine's blood ; he that burneth frankincense as if he blessed idols." [4]

They have not even priesthood, because they receive it from the dead hand of Gregory.[5] A dead man is not to be taken up to the

[1] The Syrian correspondent in answer to whose queries Barṣalibi wrote the present solutions of the objections of the Armenians.

[2] Matt. xxiii. 24. [3] Lit. your hands. [4] Is. lxvi. 3.

[5] Text *Krikor* according to the Armenian pronunciation. The author refers here to the claim of the Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia who pretends that he is the only man who can give a valid ordination, as no episcopal ordination is valid without putting on the head of the ordinand the arm of Gregory the Illuminator, which he possessed. See Tournebize, *Hist. pol. et relig. de l'Arménie*, p. 362.

altar as St. Basil says, and priesthood is a gift from heaven, and it is conferred by means of prayers, and not by heredity or by transmission from one to another—or by the imposition of a dead hand on the head—in order to (satisfy) the greed of their priests and their love for ecclesiastical honours which they snatch from one another by Simony.

The fact that they take bribes in conferring priesthood, and that they collect gold from people who are blameworthy and from those who have indulged in third marriages, is against the admonitions of the Apostles, who have warned us not to accept gifts from people of reprehensible conduct as long as they remain in their sinful state.

It is not the time to dilate on the fact that they have no monasticism in practice, but only the outward sign of it which consists in the woollen garment from sheep and the haircloth cowl from goats, which their monks wear ; indeed, in no other Christian nation do woollen wearers[1] eat meat besides them. What incites the wrath of God is that, even their (spiritual) heads and their bishops eat meat, and in our days they openly and defiantly[2] eat young pigs and chickens.

Christ did not eat meat when He rose from the dead but fish and honey, and in this He taught us the ascetic life of monasticism, in which after one wears the garb one ought not to eat meat. Furthermore, in enacting that monks should not eat meat the Apostles wished them not to be prone to choler. Lambs, sheep and cattle which are not meat eaters are meek, while wolves, tigers, lions and other carnivorous beasts are wrathful. It is for this reason that Christ likened His disciples to lambs, and the men of the world who consume meat to wolves,[3] etc.

THE ANSWER TO THE THIRD OBJECTION, BY DIONYSIUS.

You have asked : "Which precedes the other : night or day, evening or morning ?" We answer you as follows :—

St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil and some other Doctors say that the (Book) calls the end of the day "evening" and the end of the night "morning," and add that when Moses said : "And the evening and the morning were the first day"[4] he showed that the day and the night marked the completion of one day. These Doctors affirm that

[1] Monks.
[2] Lit. with uncovered head.
[3] Matt. x. 16, etc.
[4] Gen. i. 5.

the day precedes the night. Other Doctors, however, assert that (Moses) refers by the word "evening" to the night, and by the word "morning" to the day,[1] and thus, they say, the (above sentence) means: "And the night and the day constituted the first day." These last Doctors assert that the night precedes the day.

Moses bar Kepha interprets the sentence as meaning that when the day finished its hours and the night finished also its hours, a complete day was then finished; and Basil and John Chrysostom, who say that the day precedes the night, assert that darkness which was spread upon the face of the deep,[2] before light was created, is not called night but darkness. When Moses said: "and the evening was" he did not call that darkness "evening," but he referred by this word "evening" to the end of the day. This is known by the fact that after light was created and it had finished its hours, he said: "and the evening was." If Moses had said "and the light was" before the creation of the light, one might have supposed that by the word "evening" he was referring to that darkness. As it is "evening" denotes the end of the day. And the (evangelists) Matthew and John called also the end of the day, that is to say, the time in which the sun sets, "evening."

As to the Greeks and Armenians they count all the night of the preceding day,[3] and if one tells them that the children of Israel were ordered to keep the Passover from the evening and the night, and that the Christians also begin the festival of the Resurrection from the evening and the night, some of them answer: "According to the law of the sun the day precedes the night, and according to the law of the moon the night precedes the day."—Against them we will say:

(The moon) does not cause the days and the nights nor the mornings and the evenings, but only the months. And from the habits (of the people) and from the Book we infer also that the night precedes the day. This is confirmed by the fact that the Jews began their rest from the evening of the Sabbath day, and from the fact that we Christians first observe the vigils of festivals and recite the nocturns and after them the Matins,[4] and from the fact that our Lord rose in the night and that night is counted as that of Sunday. If they say

[1] The word used in this connection refers to the time when it is light.
[2] Gen. i. 2. [3] I translate this sentence literally.
[4] Note the Syriac word *ṣaprāwātha*.

that the first half of the night belongs to Saturday and the second half is allotted to Sunday, they will not be telling the truth because nobody believes that the night is divided into two parts. If this were so the day also will have to be divided into two parts, and likewise every day composed of twenty-four hours will have to be counted as two days and two nights.

The Apostle also counted the night before the day because he said : "I was night and day in the abyss." [1]

After having spoken above of the opinion of the Doctors, we would say that it is of no consequence whether we eat on the evening of Friday or we fast like the Syrians. What is of consequence is that we should fast one evening, and fast will not be kept as it should be if we do not fast on Thursday evening and on Saturday evening. There are among our people those who eat non-abstinence food up to the tenth or eleventh hour (which marks) the end of Thursday and the beginning of Friday. He who eats at the eleventh hour at the beginning of Friday, is no more in need of abstinence food or of the food used for fasting.

We follow nature and Book by beginning our fast at the beginning of the night of Friday till the beginning of the night of Saturday.[2] In the same way all nations begin to perform their prayers at the beginning of the night of the festivals, and (finish them) afterwards on the day (of these festivals). The Greeks and the Armenians fast before the festivals, like us ; and do not work on the evening of Sunday and Friday, like us ; and recite the prayers of the festivals on the eve and in the night of the day in which they fall, like us, but on the question of fasting they contradict themselves because they begin to fast from the morning of the day till the morning of the following day.

They recite the prayers of the Sunday of the Resurrection in the evening of Sunday, and they pretend that it is the night of Saturday ! They are rebuked by the Books which teach us that Christ rose from His tomb in the night of Sunday and not in the night of Saturday. In one thing they are to be praised : they begin to fast from morning till morning, that is to say at a time when the stomach is empty ! Their mode of fasting contradicts the mode of their prayers and their observances.

[1] 2 Cor. x. 25 (Ḥarklean).

[2] I have translated all the above sentences literally. See above (chapter iii.).

As to us although we are right in our fasting in the evening of Wednesday and Friday, we do not keep this fast as it should be, because we eat meat in the evening of Wednesday and in the evening of Friday till a late hour, *i.e.* till the sun is about to set, and because we eat meat at sunset we are taunted every day that we eat meat.[1]

We will discuss here the controversy among various nations concerning the word "evening." Some people call the night "evening," and some others call "evening" the time of sunset. Both of these opinions are right, but it should always be conceded that the night precedes the day. Moses said: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."[2] From these words we learn that "the heaven," *i.e.* fire and air, and "the earth," *i.e.* earth and water,[3] were created at the time of "darkness." Now darkness is not by itself an entity but only a negation of light. The elements were still mingled with one another, and the purifying fire was not yet separated from earth and water, nor was then the air pure and clear. This is the reason that caused that darkness.

If some one asks us: "Why did God create the world in darkness?" We will answer: in order that the paramount necessity of light might be made manifest, when it did appear, so that it might be the symbol of the world that was sitting in darkness and error, and its subsequent illumination by Christ.

When that darkness which was spread upon the face of the deep finished its twelve hours, and thus completed a full night, God said: "Let there be light;"[4] and when this light finished its twelve hours, a full day of twenty-four hours was completed; and Moses said afterwards: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day."[5] In this he called night "evening" and day "morning." That darkness is called night is borne out by Moses himself who adds: "And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night." To all these St. Ephrem bears witness when he says: "The heaven and the earth were first created in the evening, *i.e.* at the beginning of the night. When that darkness which was spread upon the face of the deep finished its twelve hours, light was created, and it was day; and

[1] For further details about the Greek, Armenian and Syrian mode of fasting see above (chapter iii.).

[2] Gen. i. 1-2.

[3] The author refers here to the four elements.

[4] Gen. i. 3.

[5] Gen. i. 5 (Peshitta Version, which I translate here literally).

when light finished its twelve hours, the firmament was created in the evening of the second night."

Basil and John Chrysostom, affirm, as we said above, that Moses means by "evening" the end of the day, and by "morning" the end of the night, and say that this day and this night denote the completion of a full day.

Let us now come to the words of the Evangelists. Matthew wrote: "In the end of the Sabbath, the evening of Sunday."[1] And Mark: "And when the even was come, that is the day before the Sabbath."[2] And Luke: "And that day was Friday and was the evening of the Sabbath[3] . . . And on Sunday, while it was yet dark, they came unto the sepulchre."[4] And John: "And the Jews, therefore, because it was Friday, so that the bodies should not remain upon the Cross in the evening of the Sabbath day[5] . . . And there they laid Jesus because the Sabbath day was beginning[6] . . . And on Sunday cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark[7] . . . Then when it was evening of Sunday."[8]

These are the words of the four Evangelists, and from them some people call the end of the day, or the time of sunset, "evening," as John said: "the evening of the Sabbath day," while some others refer the word evening to all the night, as Matthew said: "And in the end of the Sabbath, the evening of Sunday," where he refers by the word evening to the end of Saturday and to the night of Sunday.

We say then that the night precedes the day, as the Books testify. As to the word "evening" it is used in two meanings in the Books (of the Old Testament) and in the Gospel, and each Doctor has adopted the particular meaning that suited him. Evening denotes the end of the day, the time of sunset, as John said: "When it was the evening of Sunday," or "When it was the evening of Friday," that is the end of the day.[9] The Books call also night "evening," as in the sentence: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day."[10] Here Moses calls all the night "evening," and all the day "morning," and from a part he argues to the whole.

[1] Matt. xxviii. 1 (Syriac Version). [2] Mark xv. 42.
[3] Luke xxiii. 54 (Syriac Version). [4] Luke xxiv. 1 (Syriac Version).
[5] John xix. 31. [6] John xix. 42.
[7] John xx. 1. [8] John xx. 19.
[9] The author uses here two Syriac words that are more or less synonymous and mean "evening." [10] Here also I translate the Peshiṭta Version.

The (Armenians) do another thing which is contrary to Book and to nature: when their bishops and their monks wish to eat meat, they bring a hen, rub salt in its beak and afterwards slaughter it. They pretend that salt transforms the hens and other birds, and sheep which eat salt, and sanctifies them, and justifies the monks in eating them, as if they were vegetables. The ignorant do not know that all flesh and every sacrifice are seasoned with salt,[1] and that salt cannot condemn, justify, and sanctify. How is it that in the matter of your Eucharistic bread which is made of azym you flee from salt in order that it may not desecrate it, and here this same salt consecrates your sacrifices and the meat which you put in your stomach? If the salt which is consumed by beasts and birds when rubbed in the beak,[2] of a hen, sanctifies meat and transforms it into vegetables, why do you not give salt to lambs at Lent,[3] and then eat the meat of these lambs instead of vegetables?

The ignorant say here: "Why do you bless and then eat cooked food into which a mouse had fallen, after having cast the mouse out? Who flees from flesh and then eats the food in which it was found?" —Against them we will say:

We do not deliberately throw a mouse into our food, nor do we consider it as (eatable) flesh or as an unclean object. It is indeed God's creature and "every creature of God is good, and nothing is defiled if it be received with thanksgiving."[4] If there were an unclean creature the blame would be God's. Hear now how Paul rebukes you by saying: "Everything is blessed and sanctified by the word of God;"[5] from which it follows that you have neither benediction nor sanctification, as the power of a mouse exceeds that of your priests. Further, as you wash the utensil of brass or iron into which a mouse had fallen and been cooked, and then eat in the same utensil, because the heat from outside has removed the smell of the burnt mouse; and as you drink water from a cistern in which a mouse was drowned and to which all its uncleanness had stuck, so we throw the mouse out and then bless and drink the wine, as Paul taught us.

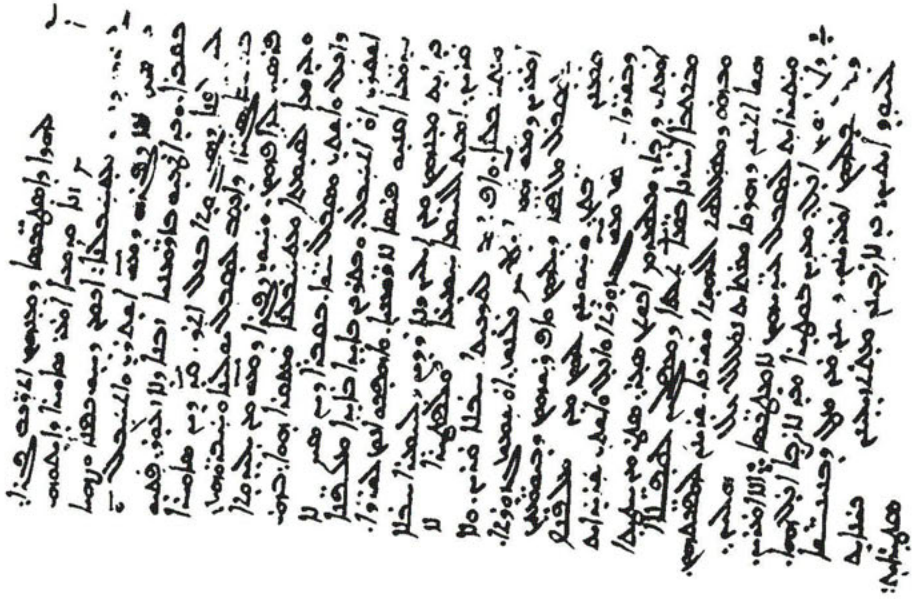
Here end the answers to the Objections of the Armenians.

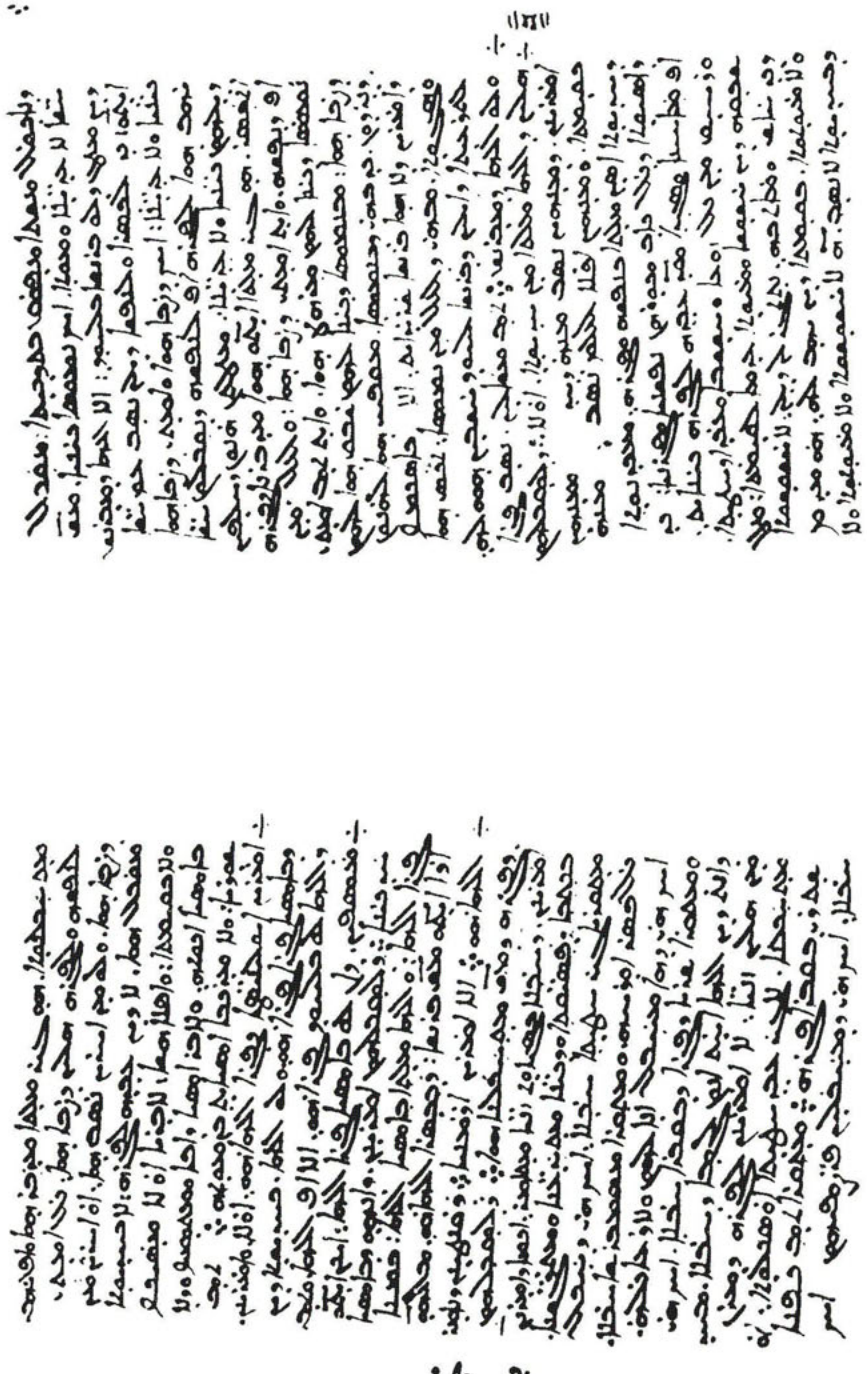
[1] Lev. ii. 13; Mark ix. 49.

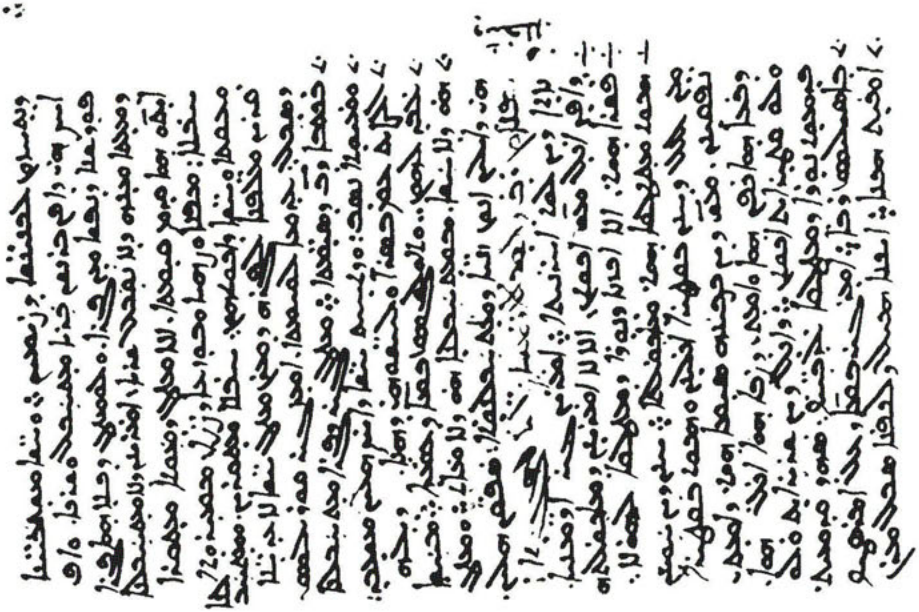
[2] The phrase *b-nafshakh* "in thy soul" of the text is unintelligible. A word or two may have been omitted by the copyist.

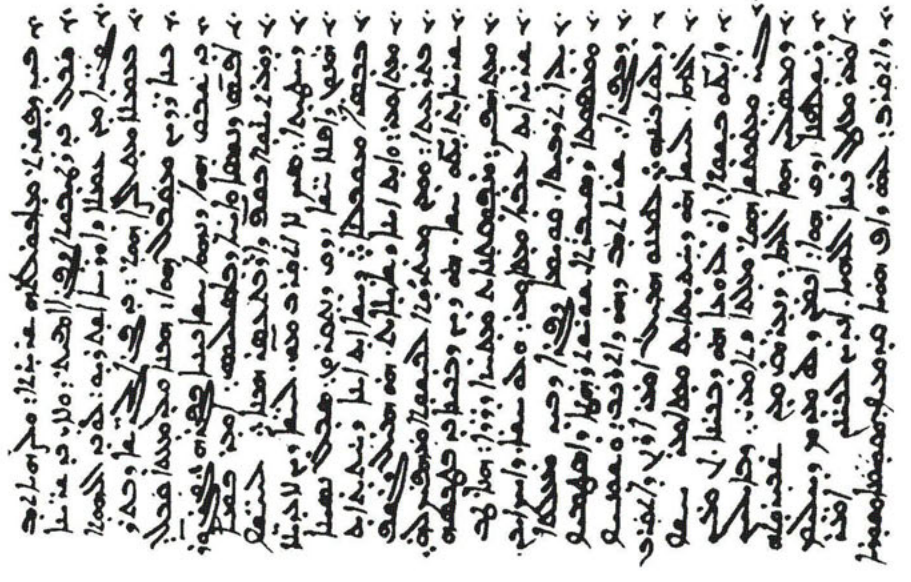
[3] Lit. "Christ's fast." [4] 1 Tim. iv. 4. [5] 1 Tim. iv. 5.

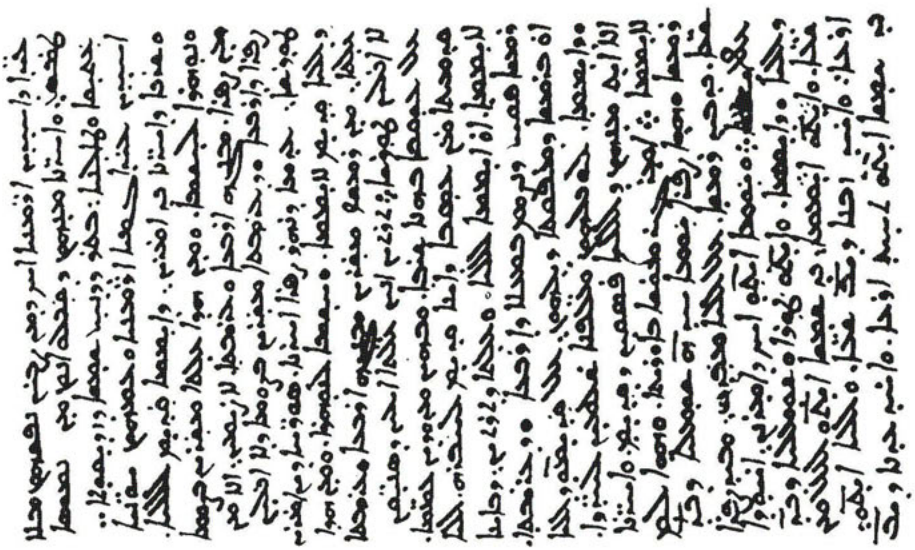


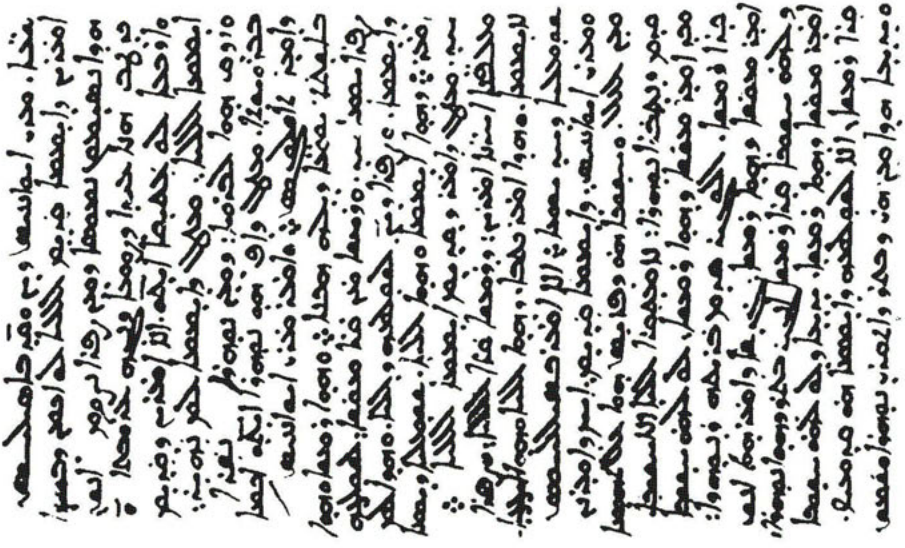




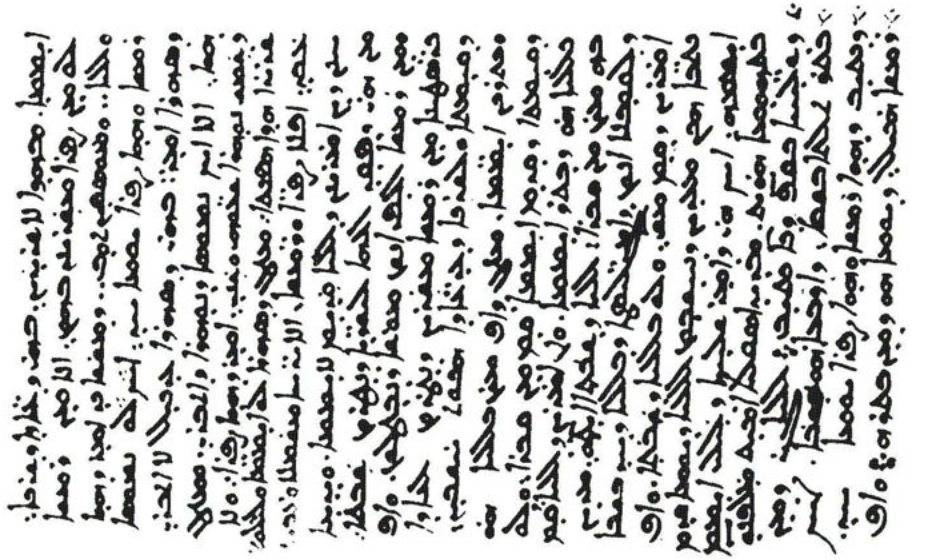




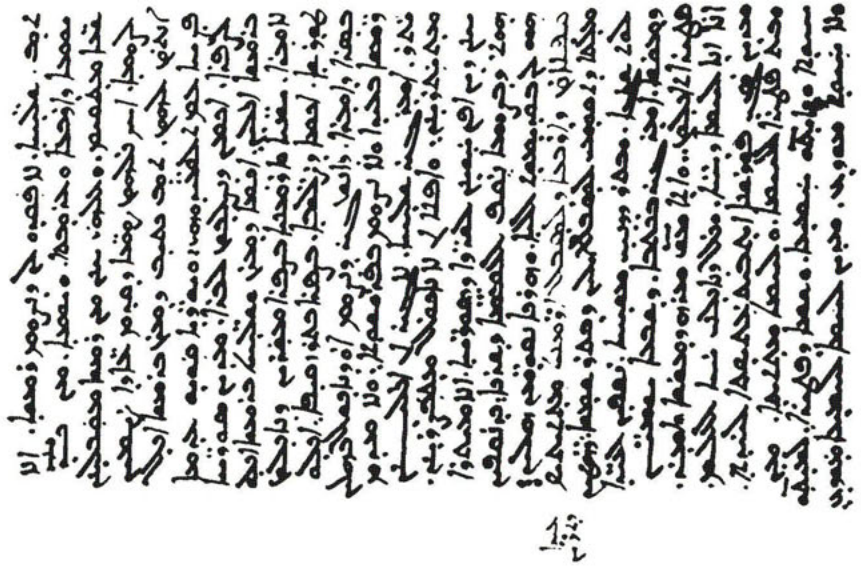


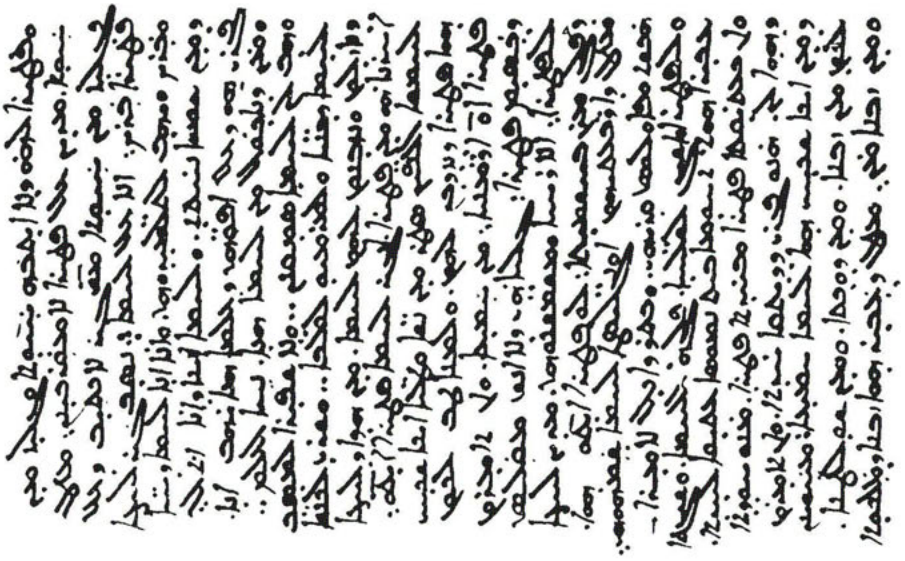


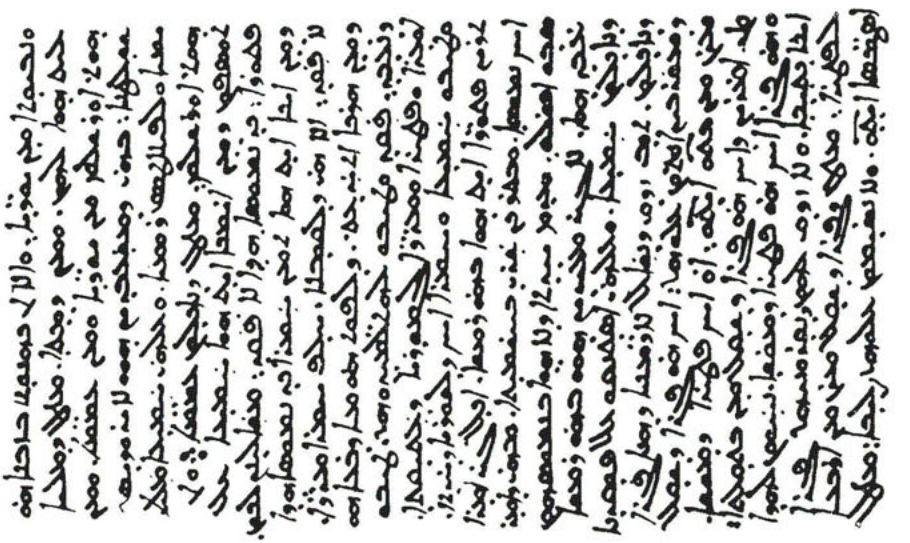


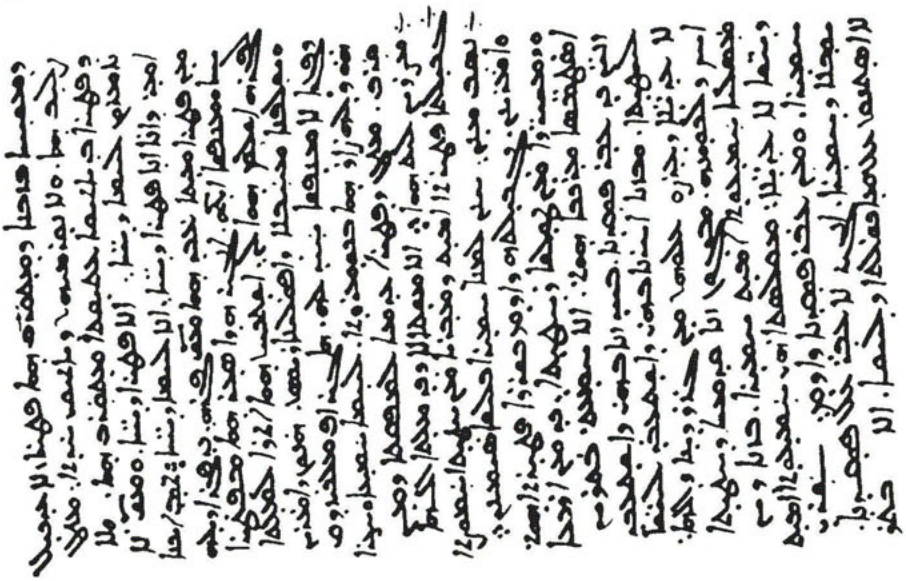


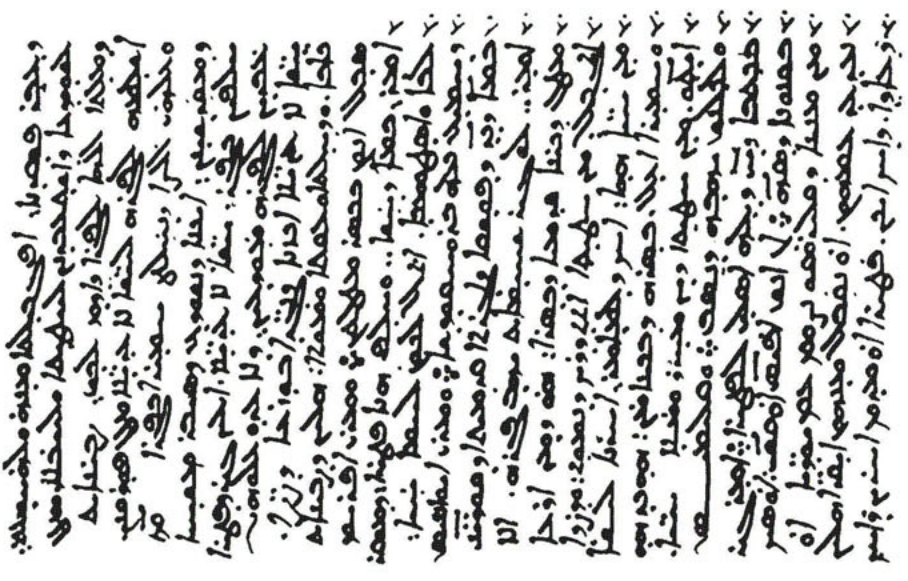


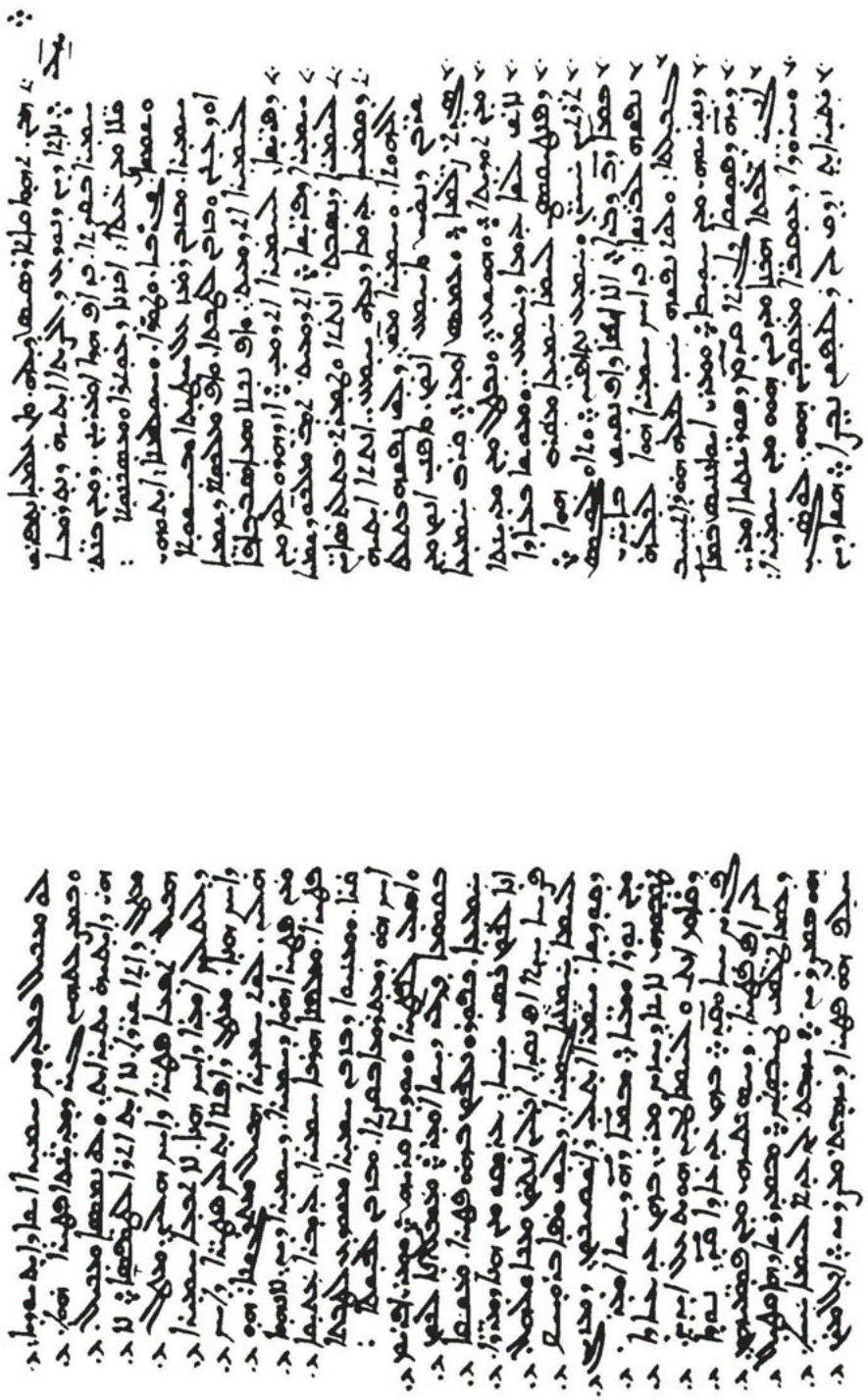




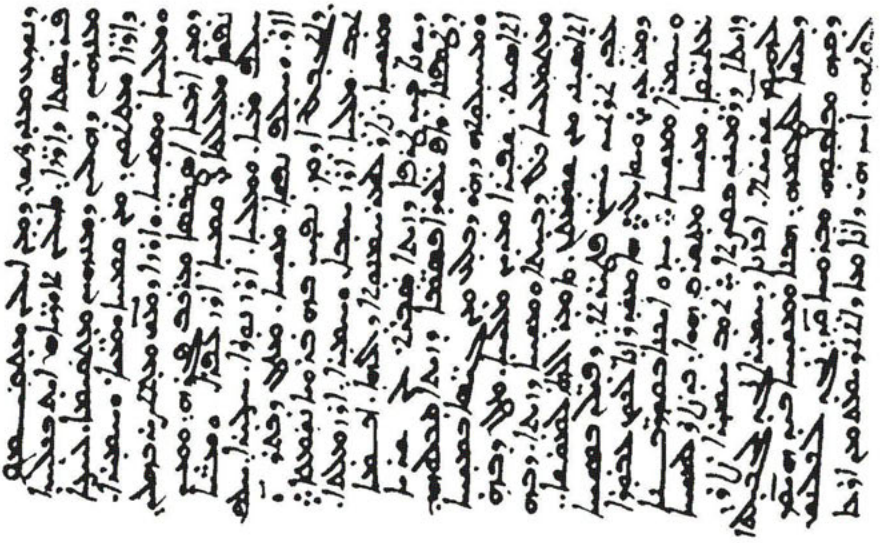


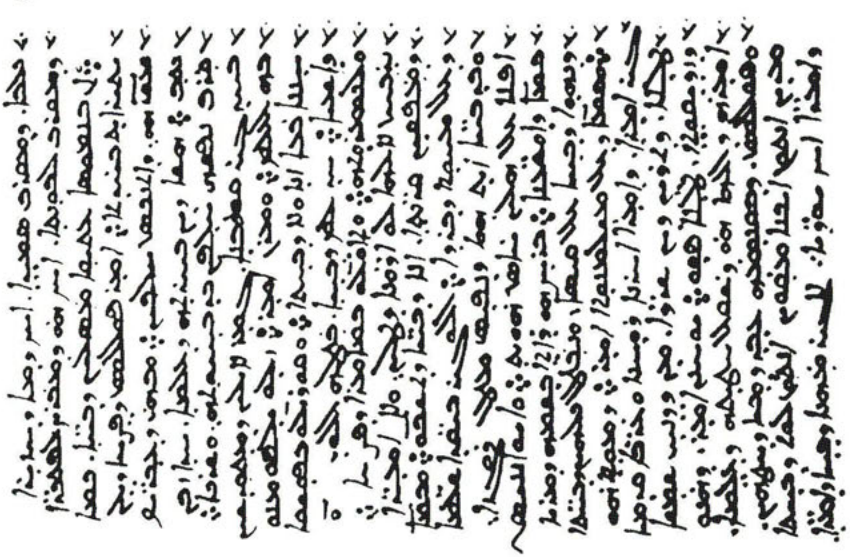




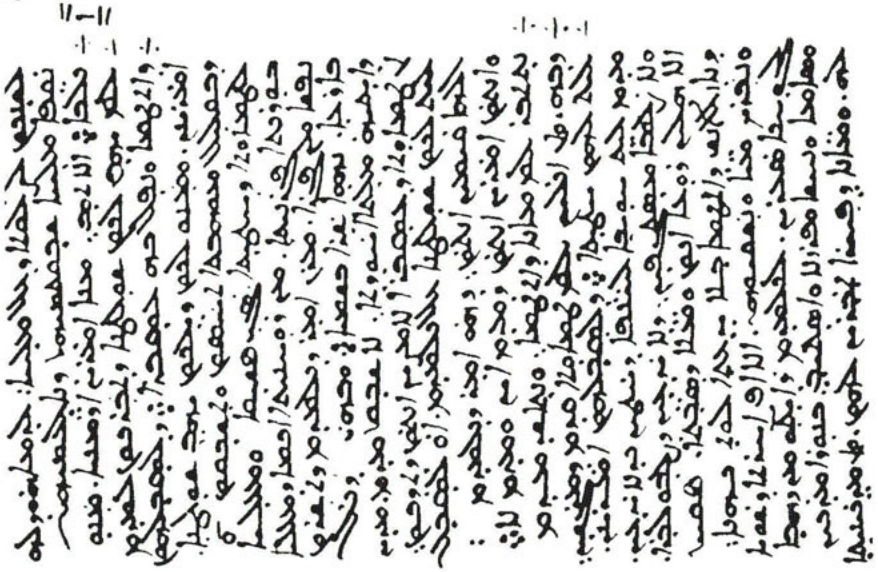




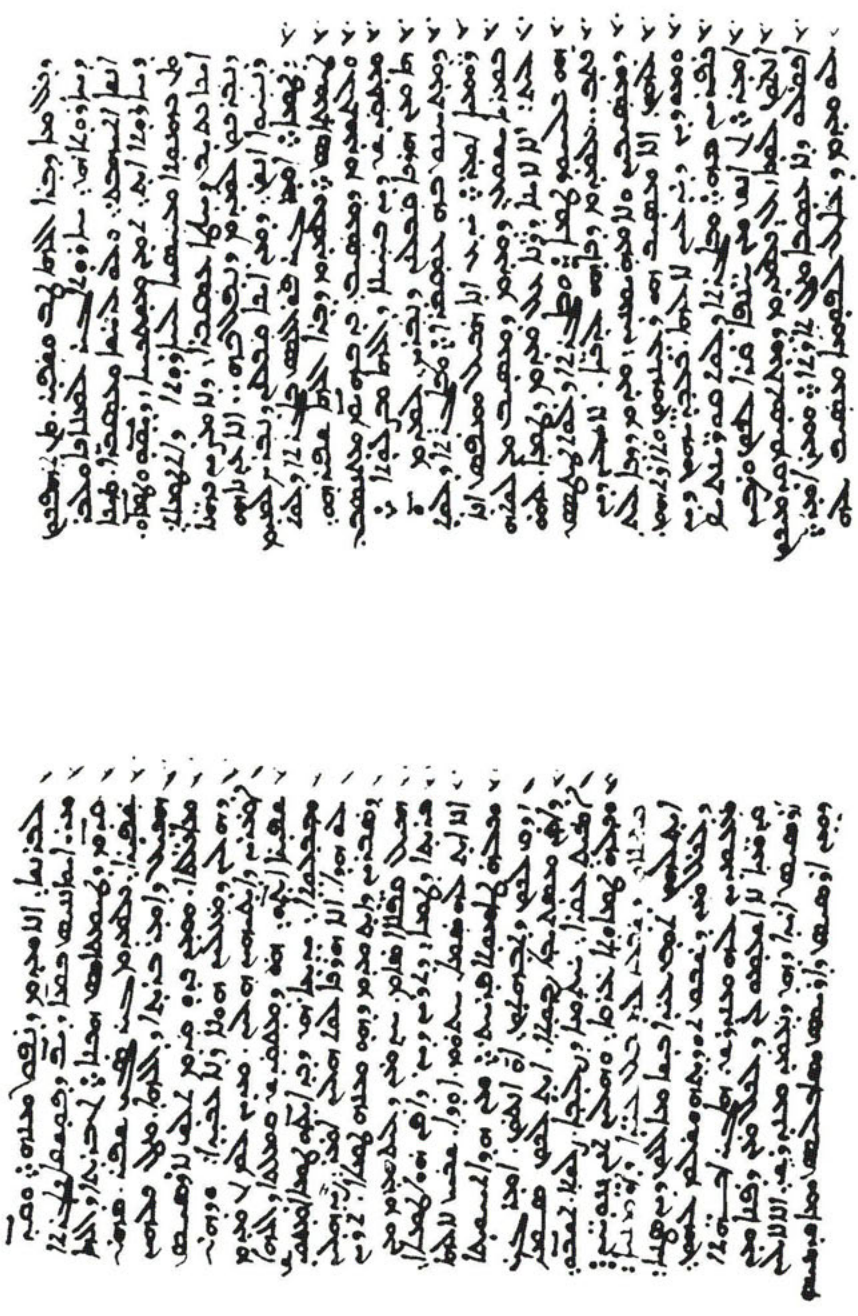


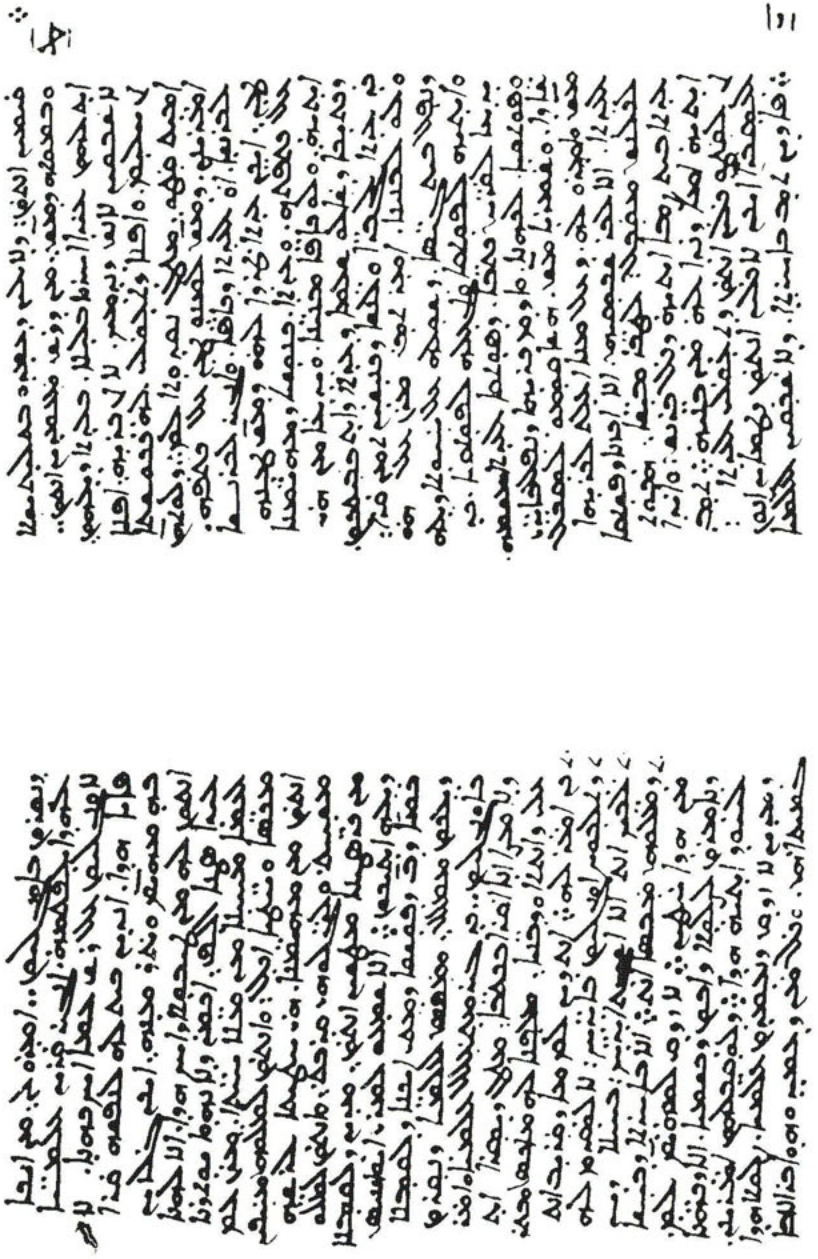


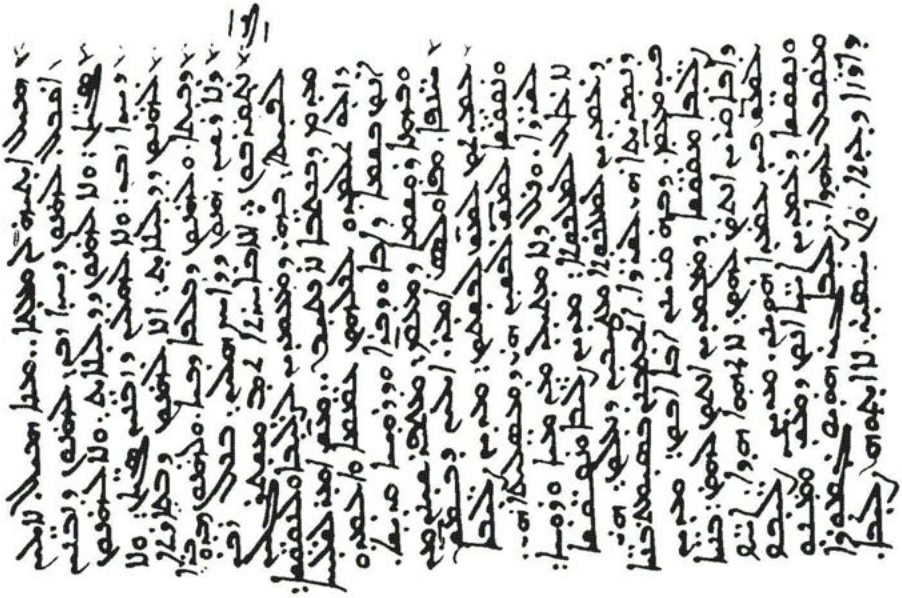


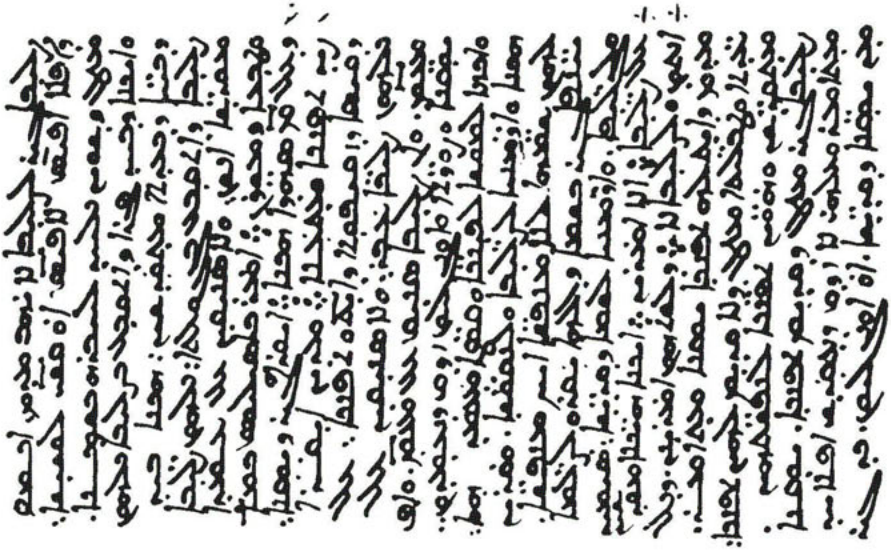


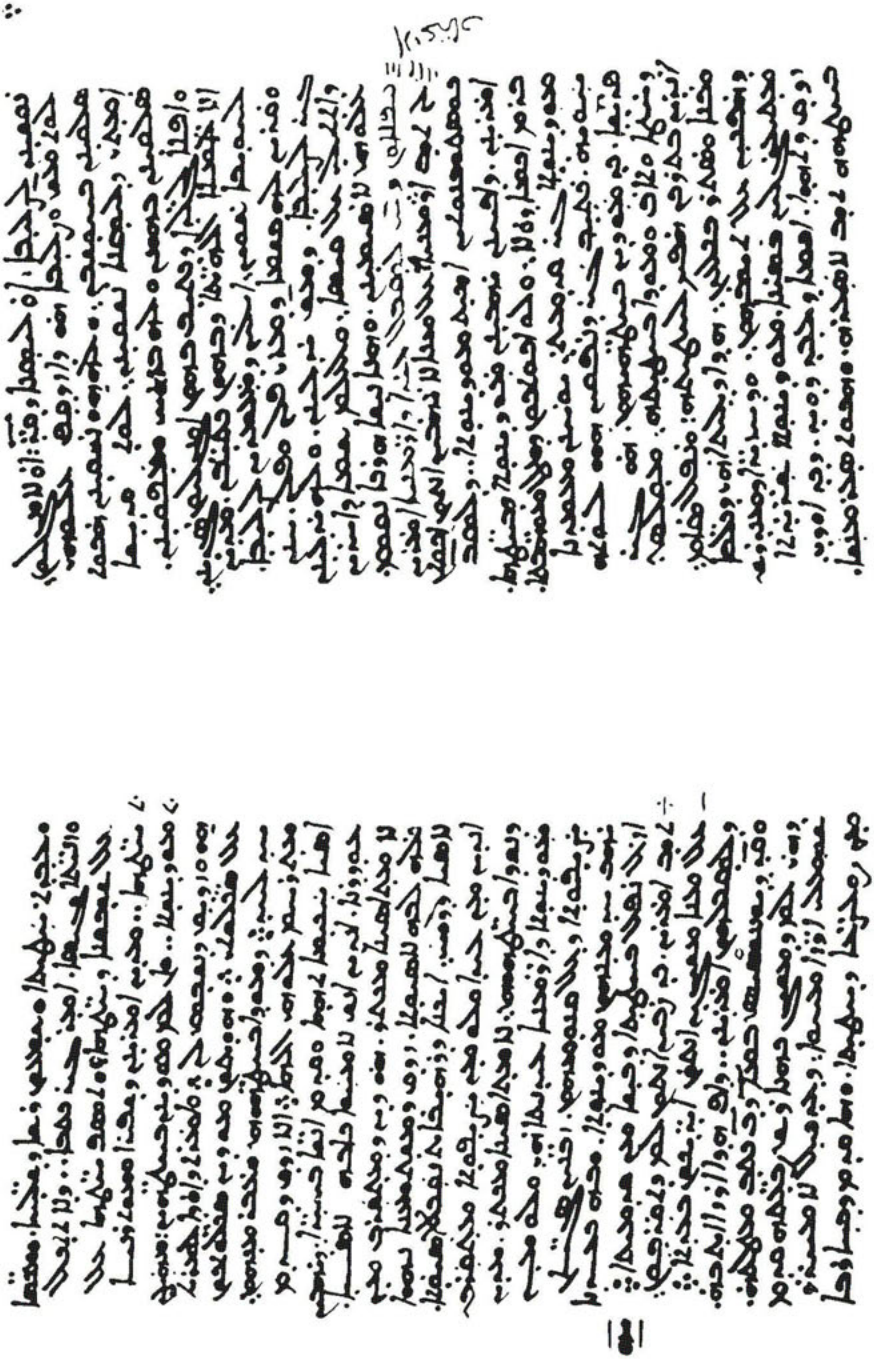


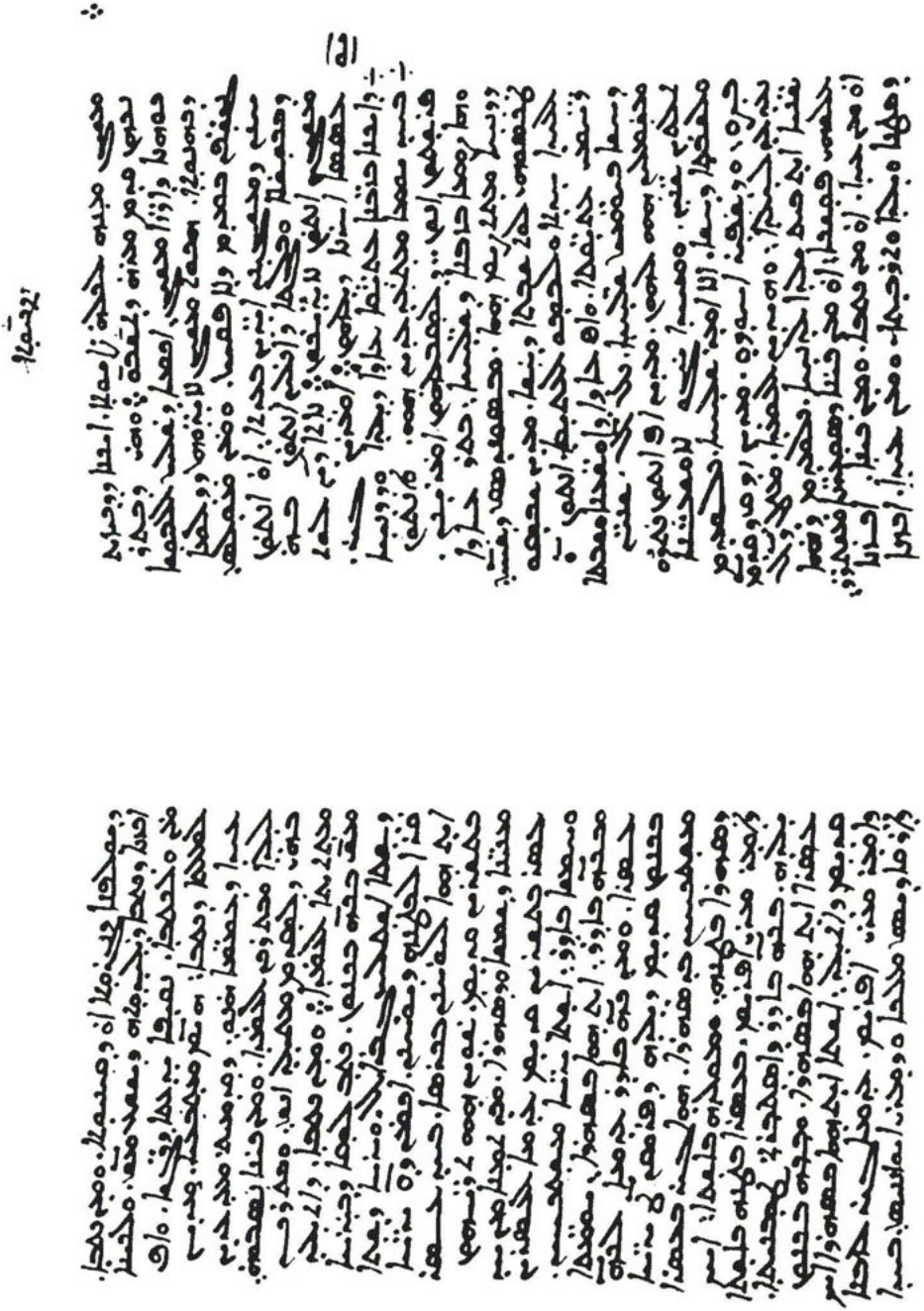


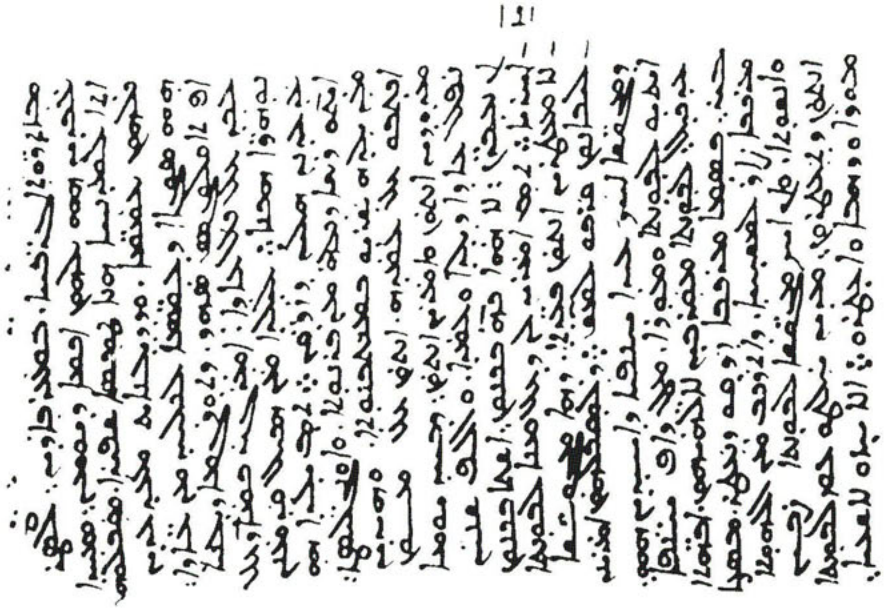


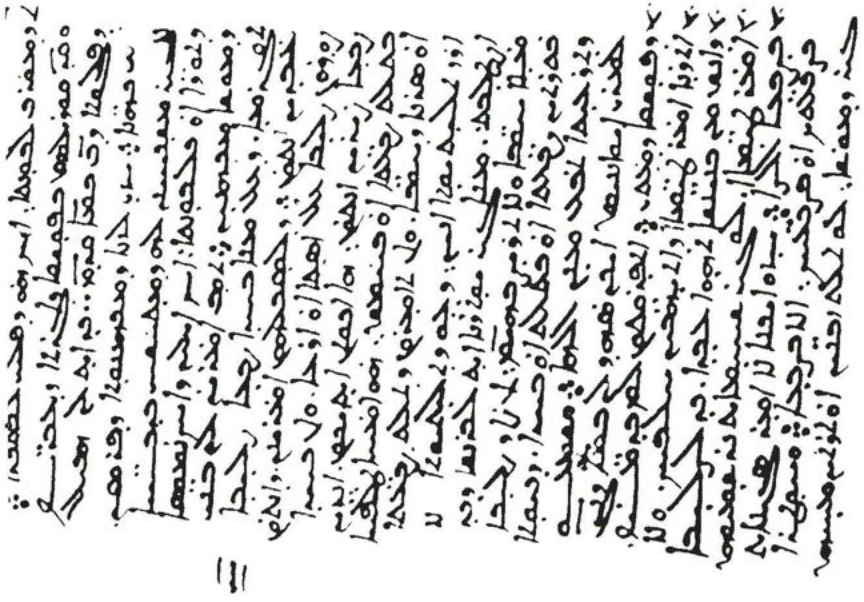


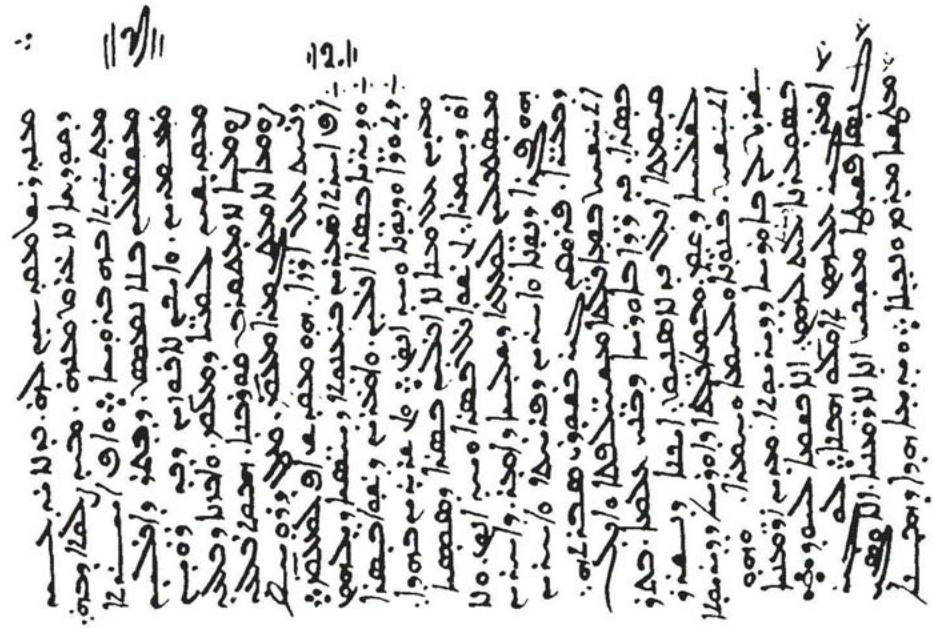




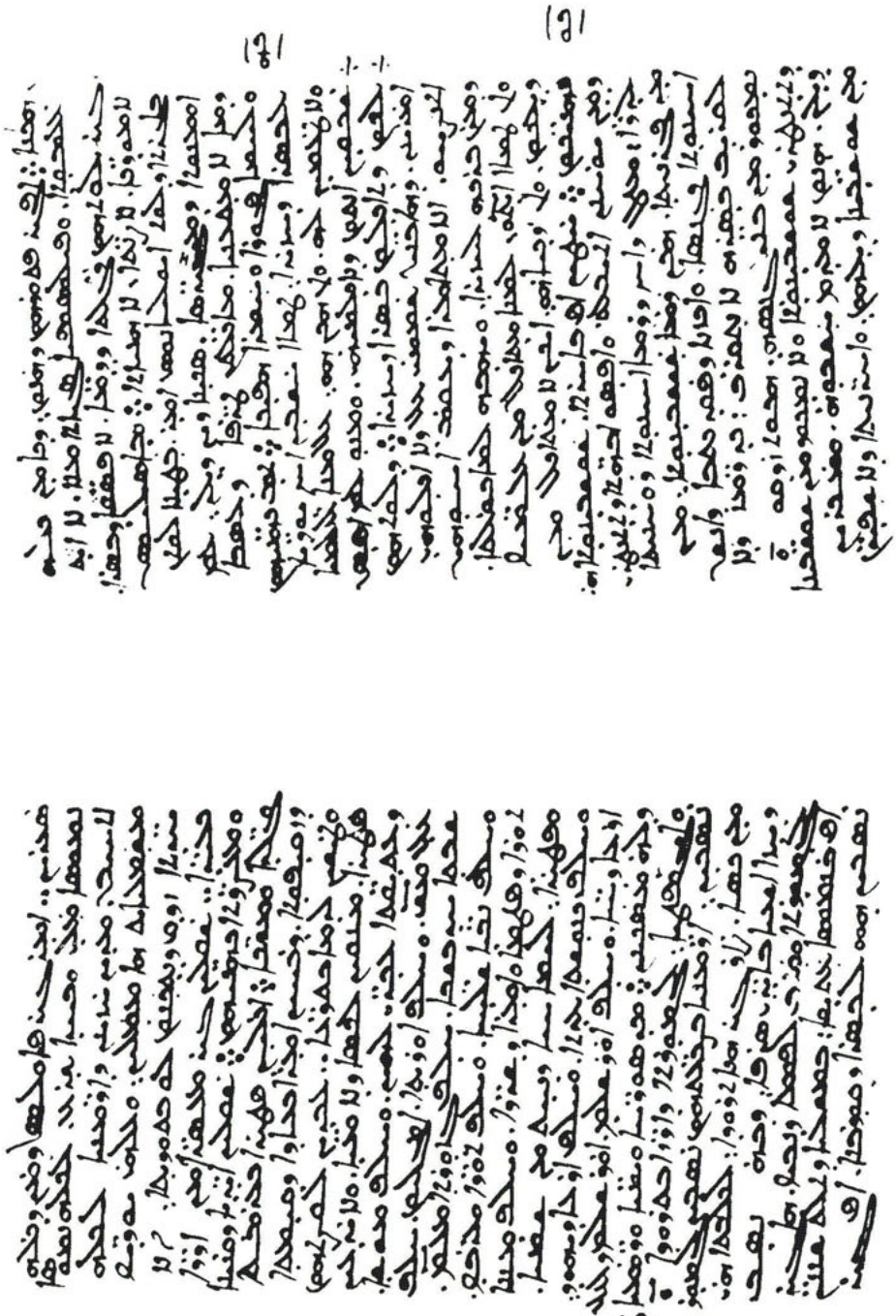






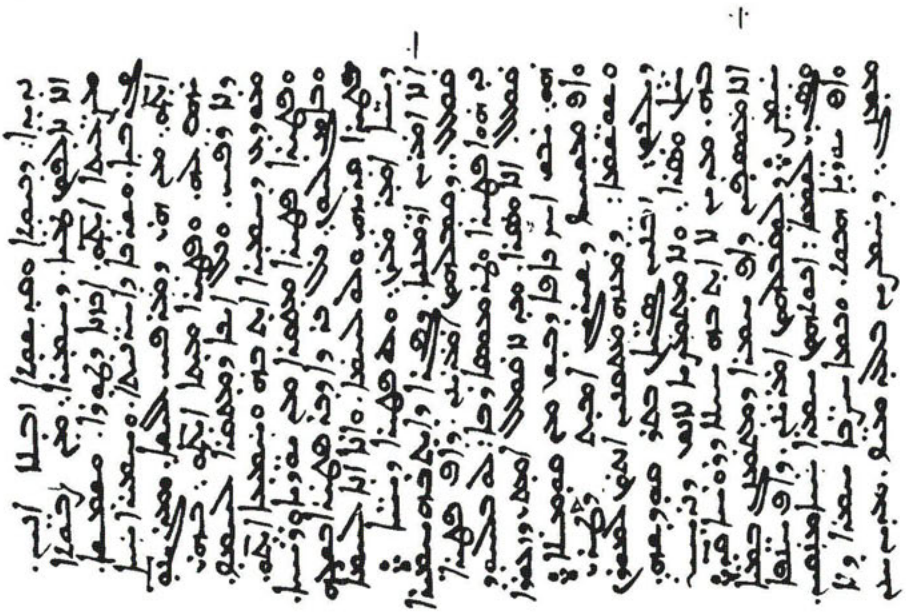


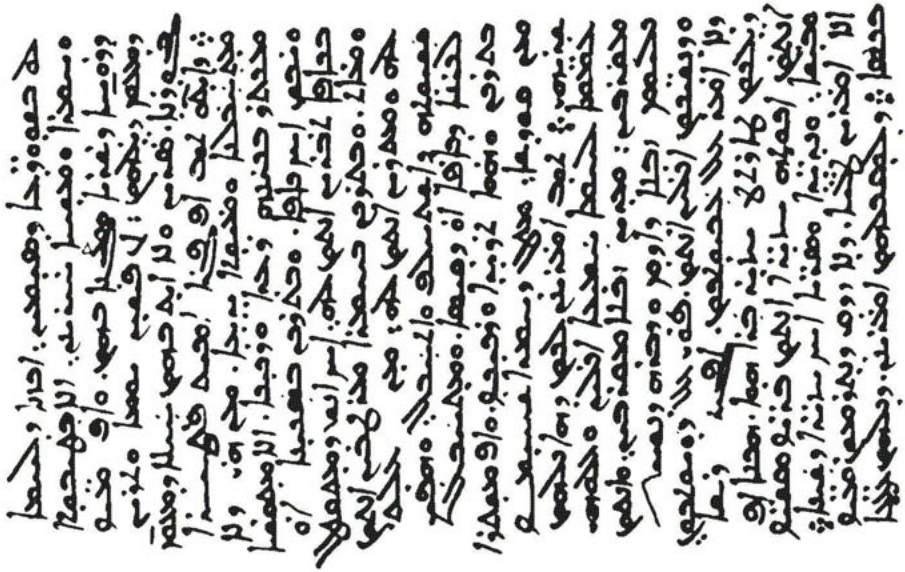


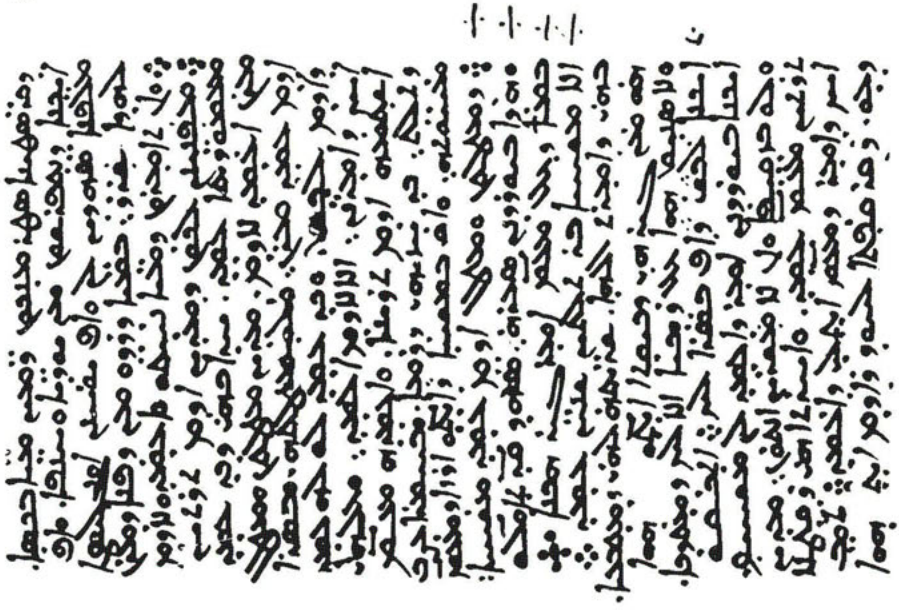


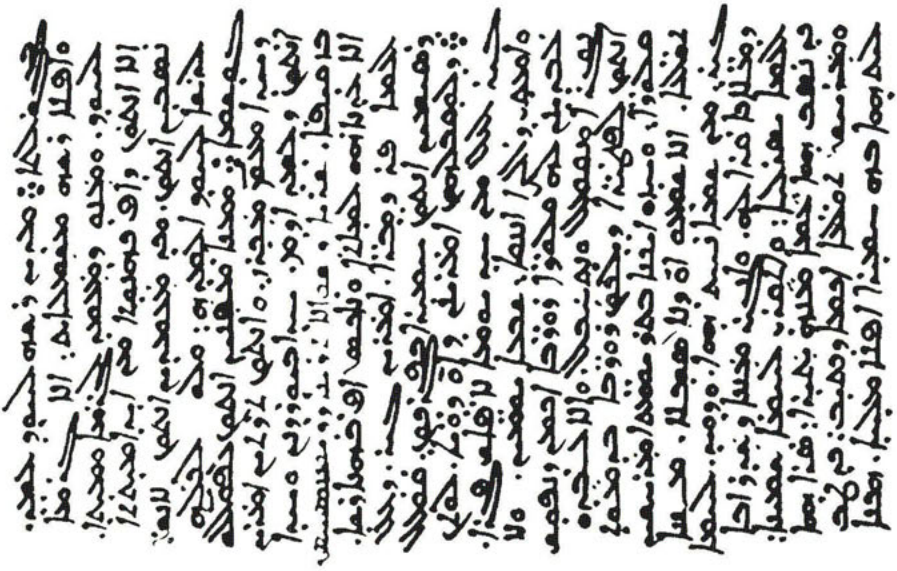


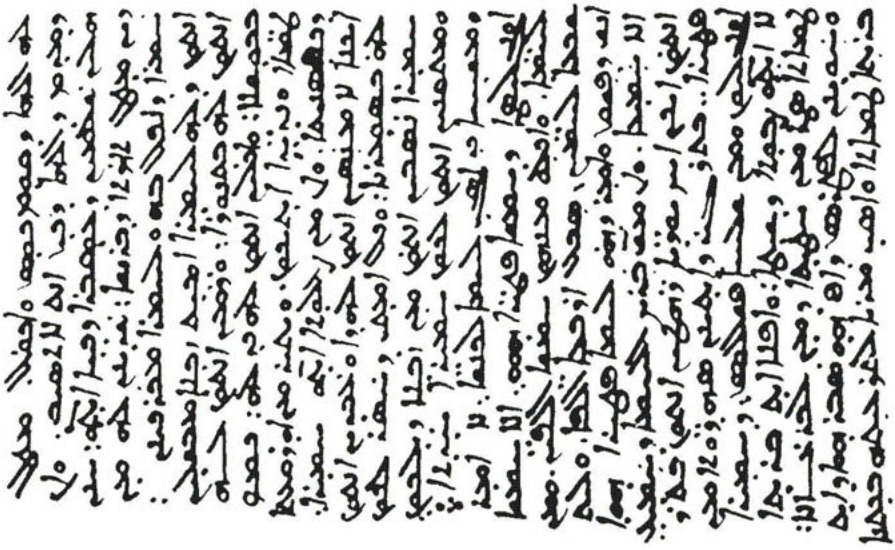


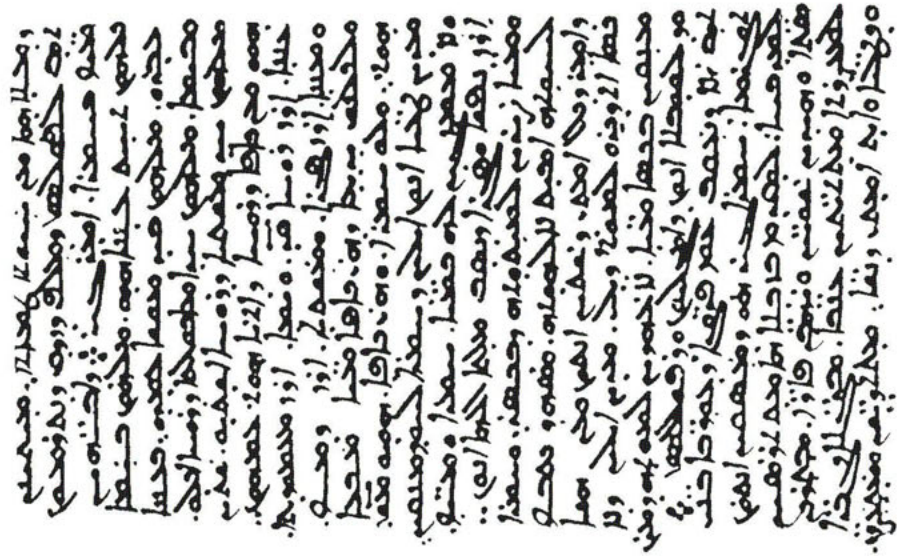












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